

THE
WEALTHY
HEALTH COPYWRITER



**How to Earn
\$13,000 for Every
Sales Letter You Write**

NICK DANIEL

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Nick Daniel

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Smashwords Edition

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

Chapter 1:

Getting Ahead of the Competition

Chapter 2:

27 Secrets to Writing Stunning Headlines

Chapter 3:

How to Pick the Right Sales Strategy and Turn it into a Winning Lead

Chapter 4:

How to Build Watertight Credibility and Win Over the Skeptics

Chapter 5:

Putting it All Together: The Prospect's Journey from Headline to Sale

[Afterword](#)

[About the Author](#)

Praise for Nick Daniel

“Finding strong copywriters is a huge challenge...and often even the seasoned pros can't beat your controls... so I was VERY impressed when Nick beat a long running control of ours. I highly recommend him...but secretly hope no one ever reads this! :)”

Jesse Cannone, CFT, CPRS, Co-founder, The Healthy

Back Institute

Introduction

Dear Fellow Copywriter,

Five years ago, I went from having no copywriting experience—nada... zilch...— to earning six figures a year and charging \$13,000 or more for a single promotion.

The problem was, it took me three years to get there. I worked day and night. I took courses, and attended seminars and workshops. I sat down with some of the biggest names in the business and grilled them for everything they know.

But here's the thing. In the process, I spent almost \$10,000, I rarely saw my family and I nearly burned out...

The Wealthy Health Copywriter distills everything I learned in those three years. I was looking for exactly this kind of book when I first started out.

The Wealthy Health Copywriter is packed with tips and techniques that will help you increase your fees and royalties, and have top clients banging down your door to get you to work with them.

Triple Your Fees Writing Sales Letters for the Health Market

Maybe, like thousands of others, you've been a health copywriter for months, even years, but you're struggling. You're sweating bullets to earn a fraction of the fees you need to pay the bills...

Or maybe you've just started, and you haven't got time to waste. You want a fast track to the top. You don't want to spend thousands of dollars on seminars, conferences and online courses. All you want is straight-up, step-by-step advice that you can use right now.

That's what this book is for. You can think of it as the Pareto Principle of health copywriting. The Wealthy Health Copywriter represents the 20% of learning you need, to make your health copywriting 80% better.

Have you ever wished you could triple your fees as a health copywriter? Or that you could boost sales for your client by as much as 200%? And earn an extra \$10,000 a year in royalties, for just one sales letter?

The copywriting techniques in this book are designed to help you do all of that, and more.

And by the way, I haven't simply plucked those figures out of thin air. They're based on real health promotions—written using the techniques in this book—and the real money they earned...

The Wealthy Health Copywriter
is a fast-track route to becoming a top-earning health
copywriter...

You can read this book on a Monday, use these techniques on a Tuesday, and see your royalties shoot up the following month.

And as every copywriter knows, the more you sell for your client, the more you can increase your fees.

Frankly, I'm a little amazed when copywriters tell me they're charging \$5,000 or less for a promotion. Good copy is worth MUCH more than that! It's about the value you bring to your clients. If you're charging \$5,000 for a sales letter than earns your client \$500,000... do you see what I'm getting at...?

The Health Copywriter's Handbook will help you get the fees you deserve, by showing you how to write health promotions that consistently beat the control.

Write Stunning Promotions and Boost Your Royalties

The Wealthy Health Copywriter tells you exactly how to write a winning health promotion that you can charge \$13,000 or more for, and that will bring in thousands more in royalties...

I've set out a step-by-step process for researching, writing and structuring a health promotion that will grip, persuade and entertain your reader from start to finish...

In The Wealthy Health Copywriter, I share:

14 little-known secrets for writing extraordinary headlines...

6 health promotion sales strategies that work every time...

My B-E-S-T headline formula—to make sure your headline has the biggest impact...

OBI's Law—One Big Idea to drive a promotion...

Direct & Indirect headlines—and when to use them...

Key buying emotions—and how they drive sales...

I also show you:

12 must-ask questions for drilling down to find the most compelling benefits of any health product...

6 common health copy mistakes...and how to fix them...

How to insert gripping stories into your copy...

How to get the most out of interviewing your client...

The key to understanding your prospect's deepest needs...

The importance of getting deep inside the minds of the 'Baby Boomer' generation...

You'll learn how to write great headlines, and how to develop a lead that drives your 'One Big Idea'. You'll learn the secret to fast and effective research, and how to come up with extraordinary evidence to support your product...and build watertight credibility. Including:

How to build a persuasive scientific argument to prove your benefit claims...

How to source and use case histories, clinical trials and research studies...

My 6 top health credibility hacks...

How to identify the most reliable studies...

What to look for in a study—and where to find it...

And how to present the evidence—so that your prospect is persuaded and intrigued...

You'll Also Learn How it All Fits Together...

How to Structure a Promotion...

from Headline to Sale...

I know how hard it can be to put all your research and ideas together... to create a flowing promotion with a strong sales strategy that moves the prospect quickly from the headline to the sale. That's why—in Chapter 5—I show you a foolproof way to structure your sales letter...based on the sales strategy you've chosen...and the kinds of readers you're writing for...

Including:

How to speed-write your sales pitch...

The 4 Sales Journeys...

How to structure a sales letter...

How to make a Don Corleone offer—an offer “you can’t refuse”...

The art of the false close...

How to rationalize a prospect’s buying decision...

How to build urgency into your Call to Action...

The art of the P.S.—your ‘second’ headline...

THESE TECHNIQUES REALLY WORK!

How do I know these techniques work?

As of writing, my last front-end promotion, for a leading health publisher on the east coast, beat the old control by 15%. My previous promotion, for a leading supplement company on the west coast, brought me a \$10,000 royalty check after six months of sales...

...and that was on top of the \$11,600 project fee I charged.

In this business, sales are the most important proof of all. If your promotion has just increased sales by 15%, there's one reason, and one reason only: great copy.

How to Read this Book

This book is for any copywriter who wants to get ahead. While the examples are taken from health promotions, the techniques and strategies in this book work for promotions in any industry.

If you're a beginner, I suggest you read and digest every chapter in this book.

If you've been doing this for a while, and want to learn a few extra techniques, I suggest you skim-read Chapter 1, then read from Chapter 2 through to the end.

My Guarantee to You

If you follow the techniques in The Wealthy Health Copywriter...

your promotions will sell much more product...

you'll gain the confidence to go for bigger and better clients...

you'll speed up your research and writing process, so you can work faster and earn more...

you'll earn the respect of your clients, your reputation will spread by word-of-mouth, and you'll need to do much less marketing...

Plus, You Can Download the Free Action Plan..

And there's something else. Throughout this book you'll find links to The Wealthy Health Copywriter Action Plan. The Action Plan is a FREE compendium of checklists, questionnaires and strategies that you can download on to your computer, print out, stick to your wall, or keep on your desk, ready when you need them. Get hold of these, and they'll save you hours of time.

To get your FREE Action Plan, click here, or go to:

<https://nickdaniel.leadpages.co/whc-action-plan/>

I hope you'll get as much from this book as you can. And I hope that these techniques will take you to the next level—so you can charge higher fees, and earn higher royalties.

And I hope that the checklists in this book will help you speed up the process of writing promotions—so that you can cut down a lot of the time it takes to finish a project.

Who knows—maybe it'll bring in the extra income you need to take a family vacation. Maybe it'll give you the income-boost you need to launch your freelance copywriting business. Maybe it'll be enough to impress your creative director, and inspire them to give you a raise...

This book is your chance to make it happen.

Go ahead and read it.

Make a promise to yourself to take immediate action, and implement these techniques in your copy.

Keep the *The Wealthy Health Copywriter* handy, so you can dip into it when you're stuck on a headline, aren't sure what kind of lead to write, or need a quick way to write powerful bullets...

And finally, just remember that you don't need a PhD or a stack of experience to write successful sales letters...

Nick Daniel

Oakland, CA

September 2015

Chapter 1

Getting Ahead of the Competition

When I first started out as a direct mail health copywriter, I was doing everything wrong. I was reading five research studies at the same time... testing out headlines before I had my 'One Big Idea'...and writing too much copy that never made it into the promotion...

In other words, I was doing everything ass-backwards...wasting time and money...and getting writer's block when I should have been steamrolling ahead...

I'm glad to say those days are gone. Today, I've managed to shave two weeks off the time it takes to write a full-length, 20-page (or longer) sales letter. Two weeks, 6 times a year...equals two more promotions, or an extra \$26,000-plus dollars a year. And that's not counting royalties...

So yes, it makes a big difference. Which is why I wanted to pass these methods on to you...

In the pages ahead, we'll get into the fine details of how to write great headlines, how to figure out the right sales strategy, the key to writing great leads...and ALL the other nuts and bolts of writing a successful promotion.

But right here, in Chapter 1, I want to show you how to get ahead of the competition before you even begin.

As I mentioned in the introduction, if you're a beginner, then you'll want to read the whole of Chapter 1...right to the end of the book.

But if you're already an established direct mail copywriter, you may just want to skim-read Chapter 1...unless you're worried you might miss something essential...(like the checklist of must-ask product questions, mid-way through this chapter)!

...

Smart Ways to Get Ahead of the Competition

Before you start writing...before you even begin your research...you can do a whole bunch to achieve the one thing you **MUST** achieve to be a successful direct mail copywriter: **BEAT THE CONTROL...**

The control (if you're new to all this) is the existing promotional copy that's being used to sell the product. It's the promotion you're hoping to replace—by writing an even better one...

And you can get a big head-start without even lifting a finger...

Imagine you've just landed a new client. Hopefully you've asked them for a fee you deserve. You've received the product specs, customer profile and existing sales materials. You've got your hands on the current control—the existing promotion for the product you're selling.

How can you use this information to get ahead of the competition?

How can this information help you write a promotion that will sell more, bring you higher royalties, and justify higher project fees from your next client?

Before you start writing, before you even begin to think about a sales strategy, a headline or a big idea, there are 5 essential steps you should take:

Analyze the control (and figure out how to beat it)...

Get hold of the existing research (without lifting a finger)...

Interview the 'product champion'...

Research your prospect until you know them as well as your closest friend...

Understand the health market's biggest customer base...

How to Analyze and Beat the Control

Studying the old control is the single most powerful thing you can do to speed-dial your way to higher royalties and project fees. Why? Because if you can identify weaknesses in the existing sales strategy—whether it's the headline, the close, the offer, or anything else...then you already know how to beat it.

It sounds obvious—but you'd be surprised how many copywriters fail to do this. Yet it's the most important 80:20 rule that will help you beat the control with the minimum of time and effort.

That's why I've put together a checklist of 5 common health copy mistakes that you can easily fix, to beat the control. Identify—and then correct (or avoid) them in your own copy—and you're already several steps ahead.

You'll notice I've used phrases like “Ugh!” or “Yawn!” to describe these mistakes. There's very good reason for this! When you're critiquing copy, the most powerful way to do it is to assess your own gut reaction. What are you feeling? What's your emotional response? Bored? Fed up? Skeptical? These emotions are your most powerful critical tool—and will help you see exactly what's wrong with the control...and how you can fix it...

5 Common Health Copy Mistakes You Can Quickly Fix...to Beat the Control...

1. “Bleagh! The headline’s weak! It doesn’t grab me at all...”

Problem: How do you spot a weak headline? A headline is weak because it fails my B-E-S-T Headline Formula. A headline should be Beneficial, Extraordinary, Specific and Time-sensitive.

Solution: Remember to make sure your new headline passes my B-E-S-T Headline Formula test. In Chapter 2, I'll give you a stack of examples, and show you exactly how to do this...

2. “Yawn! The science is too dense (or just plain boring)!”

Problem: You already know that supplement and newsletter copy relies heavily on scientific evidence. Results of clinical studies, statistics from case studies, quotes from experts. But a less experienced copywriter presents this information in a way readers find difficult to follow. They may also fail to emphasize the real-life benefits implied by the evidence.

Solution: simplify the language, use metaphors, and focus on real-life benefits. In Chapter 4 we show you exactly how to do this, with a ton of examples...

3. “Yeah right! The claims are too incredible (I just don’t believe them)!”

Problem: Have you ever read copy that you just don't believe? If so, it's usually because either the information has not been made credible, with

evidence from a trustworthy source—or because the language used in making the claim is too 'superlative', or 'OTT' (Over The Top)...

Solution: find better evidence or support, or tone the language down. The strategies in Chapter 4 will show you exactly how to do this...

4. “Huh?! Too many big ideas are driving the copy. I’m totally confused!”

Problem: It's tempting, when you have a ton of great ideas, to put them all in. But sometimes less is more. This is where the 'Power of One' is important.

Solution: Make sure the headline and lead are driven by just One Big Idea. Depending on your sales strategy, this could be one core benefit or promise, or one major pain point and solution. In Chapter 3, I explain OBI's Law (the law of 'One Big Idea'). I show you exactly how to find it...and share a bunch of examples...

5. “Whaaaa? The copy is all mixed up, it doesn’t make sense!”

Problem: Have you ever read copy that seems to have no sense of direction? That moves from one idea to the next, with no connection between them? That's because there's no 'golden thread' linking these ideas together.

Solution: Make sure your 'One Big Idea' is woven throughout the copy, linking health issues, ingredients or premiums together, so the reader feels they are getting the same 'big message' from page 1 all the way through to the end. In Chapter 4, I'll explain—with examples—exactly how to do this...

I run through this checklist every time I read the control of a product I'm writing for. It gives me an instant head-start, and the certainty that even before I begin, I've found ways to beat the control, increase sales, and earn more royalties.

More than anything, it gives me confidence right from the get-go. And that confidence can pay off big-time, letting you forge ahead with your research and writing, knowing that you're already ahead of the competition...

Plus, the ONE Thing MOST Copywriters Miss...

There's something else that many copywriters miss—but that top copywriters will almost always include. Feedback from clients shows it makes a ton of difference to sales.

It's called the art of the false close...

A false close is an essential element in a successful sales letter. It comes just when the reader believes everything has been said about the product, but when there are still some lingering doubts. The false close is designed to

jump on those doubts and stamp them out at just the right moment, when the reader assumes you've going to make the offer, and is expecting to be asked for money. Instead, you show them another benefit, or series of benefits. This simple but effective technique is a proven strategy for making more sales—but 95% of copywriters aren't using it!

I'll cover the false close in detail in Chapter 5. I'll give you plenty of examples, with analysis, and show you how to write your own. For now, it's important just to check whether the control uses one or not— because if it doesn't, you have yet another way to beat it.

How to Get Ahead with your Research—Without Lifting a Finger

I'll say it over and over again in this book. It's not enough to do plenty of research. The best ideas come from research that goes above and beyond what most copywriters have the energy to do. Those extraordinary ideas that shout out at you, from an incredible headline...the ones you find gripping, unique and highly credible? They don't appear out of thin air. If they did, you'd see them all the time. But you don't do you? I'll bet you're amazed by less than 5% of the headlines you see.

Great ideas come from going the extra mile—by asking more questions, digging deeper and making unusual connections no-one else thought of.

So it would help if you had a head-start, right? If you could get ahead of the research before you open your computer, or visit your local library...

In Chapter 4 I cover everything you need to know about doing research for a health promotion. How to build watertight credibility. How to read research papers and case studies. How to turn great research...into great copy...

But there are two get-ahead strategies you can use before you begin— and all you have to do...is ask a simple question...

I call them the Get-ahead 80:20 Rules. They're two clever short cuts that will speed up your production of winning copy, allowing you to take on more projects and increase your income.

They're so simple, it's almost embarrassing to mention them here—and yet 80% of copywriters I know don't even bother to follow these rules...

80:20 Rule #1—Ask for the Research!

For a product that already has sales material (a control you're trying to beat), it's a simple rule that will instantly get you ahead of the game...

It seems obvious, doesn't it? But you'd be amazed how many copywriters don't do this one simple thing!

Someone, somewhere, will have a folder containing all the research the company has ever done on the product, whether it's a supplement, a subscription service or the treatments described in a premium. Get hold of that research, and you have access to dozens of research studies it would take you days to find on your own...

80:20 Rule #2—Ask for the 'final draft' copy of the original control.

Another way to get hold of the research...is to ask for the draft of the original control—the one with the bibliography or footnotes containing links to the research. This will give you instant access to every reference for every claim the copy makes.

But don't make the mistake of thinking this is all the research you need. Not by a long shot. It's only the beginning—but it can save you many hours better spent getting ahead of that research and finding amazing, intriguing, never-before-seen information about the product...

Remember, the more research you do, the more your product will sell. And believe me, 95% of health copywriters don't do enough research.

And that's great news for you! Because if you do this one thing, you'll already be doing what the top 5% of successful copywriters do without fail. Just remember this golden rule:

Copywriters who do the best research...will sell the most product. Leading to higher royalties...and, ultimately, higher project fees...

...

Interviewing the Product Champion

Another fool-proof way to get ahead and put your promotion on fast-forward...is to interview the product champion. In other words, the person in the company who is behind the product, who understands it best, and can break down exactly why it was created and what it does.

Ask the right questions, and you can save yourself days of time...

So here's a list of must-ask questions. I've written them so you can use them—or adapt them—for any type of product (and for any industry). In the health industry, these work just as well for supplements as they do for newsletters.

I've also tried to explain the reasoning behind the questions—which is just as important as the questions themselves.

One or two of these questions might seem simple to you. But the lesson is, never be afraid to ask a simple (or even 'stupid') question! You'd be surprised at how often you think it's a silly question—only to be surprised, or even amazed, by the answer. The key is to remember the end-goal of your questions—which is to create extraordinary copy.

The answers you get back will become the foundation of your research into the product. There are many ways to ask these questions, and you can add or subtract them as you see fit...

12 Must-ask Questions for the Product Champion

1. Please summarize your product / service as accurately as possible.

What is it? What does it do? How does it work? What's the idea behind it?

This is a question about the features of the product. You're looking for specifications. Later, you'll look at each of these features, and work out ALL the benefits of EVERY feature—down to how a newsletter subscription which breaks down medical information into short articles will help an elderly prospect...one who doesn't have a great memory...grasp the info quickly and easily.

If it's a newsletter, you can ask, what is it about? How many editions are published each month? What main topics does it cover? If it's a supplement, you can ask, what health problems is it trying to solve? What are the ingredients? Why are they special? How were they made?

2. We're in an elevator. You have 15 seconds to completely sell me on your idea. Go!

Why is this product a must-have for your customers? What makes it better than anything else on the market?

The point of this question is to understand your client's perception of the USP (Unique Selling Proposition) of the product. You're looking for their gut reaction, the thing that makes them most passionate about the product.

But if your client only talks about features—instead of core benefits— then you'll know they haven't really thought this one through. And that gives you the green light to explore those benefits and come up with something incredible and new.

Also, if there's one thing I've learned, it's this: never take the client's word as gospel truth. Always follow your own instincts. If you think you might have discovered a better USP, based on solid research, then check it out with your client, and see what they think. You never know, it might just blow them away. There's no harm in asking.

When I first started, I once made the mistake of not following my instincts. My client suggested some headline ideas, but in my gut I felt they just weren't good enough. But did I make them better? No, I didn't. Because I was new, I didn't trust my instincts. We ran with the client's headline—and the promotion bombed. Never again! From that day on, I vowed to trust my own instincts—whether it was a USP, a sales strategy, or a headline.

The lesson here? Trust yourself...

3. What are the product's benefits?

In my experience, many clients give fairly brief answers to this question—perhaps 3-4 main benefits. That isn't enough for a successful promotion. After the interview, you'll need to spend time drilling down much further to find dozens, even hundreds, of hidden benefits that will really drive sales...

To get more out of this question, ask about lifestyle as well as health benefits. How might a prostate supplement improve a man's self-esteem? How might a treatment for arthritis help an elderly woman get out and socialize more? How will a newsletter help a wife gain her husband's trust when she suggests a treatment that could lower his blood pressure? These are the benefits customers really care about.

We're asking this question because it's the benefits, and not the features, which sell the product. The big promises you make in your promotion will be benefit-driven. Your headline will be benefit-driven. Your 'One Big Idea' (see Chapter 2) will have a major benefit at its core.

4. Which benefit do you think is most important to your customer, and why?

This will give you a sense of why the customer and the product are 'meant' for each other. What connects them? How has the product been tailored to their needs? Again, don't take your client's answer as the gospel truth. It's common, after further research, to find even stronger benefits, relating to a

need or desire in your customer, that your client might have missed. If you do find hidden benefits like this, your client will love you for it!

5. How is the product different from the competition's?

What makes the product unique? Does it have features that are brand new? Does it do something that's never been done? For supplements and treatments, does it reduce or ease a symptom more than ever before, according to studies? Does it combine ingredients in a way that makes them more potent? Is it purer, and freer of toxins than other products? Does it act faster?

The purpose of this question is to discover what makes the product stand out—because this will become a major part of your headline and your 'One Big Idea'. It will provide you with one or more of the most important selling points, and become a major reason why prospects choose your product over other similar products on the market.

6. Is there something about your product, or company, that will lend credibility to the pitch?

Has the company, or its leader, won any awards? Has the product been acknowledged by experts? How many people have benefited from the product so far? How many years has the company been in business?

The aim of this question is to help you build credibility and trust.

7. What problems does the product solve in the market place?

If possible, you want to be able to prove that the product you are selling fills a gap in the market. For instance, a product I recently marketed combined two sources of Omega-3. Until this product went on the market, these two forms of Omega-3 had never been used together. Studies proved the combination was 10 TIMES more potent and faster acting than other forms of Omega-3. In this way, the product solved the problem of speed (it worked faster) and efficacy (it worked better).

This product solved a second market-place problem. A big source of Omega-3 is fish oil, which—as everyone knows—has a nasty smell. This new product didn't use fish oil, and actually smelled pretty good. So that was another problem solved.

8. How is the product positioned in the marketplace?

Is it a better way to do something that's already being done? Is it completely new? Has it been around for long, or is it brand new? Does it do something different? Or just better? If better, in what way? Faster? More powerful?

This is similar to asking how the product is different from others on the marketplace—but here you're looking for the client's thoughts on how the product could be marketed. If you've already covered this in your interview, move on to the next question...

9. What products on the market today are the closest competition to you?

You'll need to get a list of these, so you can look them up online and study them carefully. This will help flesh out your answers to question #8. By comparing products, you'll see where your own product—the one you're marketing—stands out.

If it's a supplement with similar ingredients, are the doses bigger? Are the combinations of ingredients different? If it's a newsletter or online magazine, how often do subscribers get the publication, and in what format? How much access do they have to the archives?

10. What's the price of the product?

Pricing isn't just about the cost. It's also about the rationale behind the cost, and how the value of the product can be broken down for the customer.

What bonuses are included? Are there any other elements in the package that bring value? How do all these compare to your competition?

There are different ways of presenting cost in a promotion—and these are covered in detail in Chapter 5. Cost can be broken down into cents a day—which can make a product appear to be almost free. Or it can be compared to something of comparable price the customer pays for every day, like a bus ticket or a lunch at Appleby's. If you can convince your customer that a

supplement will boost their immune system by 900%— for the price of a bus ticket—then you've turned the cost into a very persuasive selling point.

11. How much of a guarantee are you willing to give?

A good promotion always provides a guarantee. That means telling the prospect that there's no risk if they spend money on the product. If they don't like it—for whatever reason—they can get something back.

So you'll need to know what kind of guarantee the client wants to offer. Is it a 100% money-back guarantee? Is there a time-limit? Does the prospect need to send anything back? What agreement will you be making with the customer? In Chapter 5, you'll learn about different guarantees and how to word them.

12. Tell me your story, or the story of the person whose “voice” I will be writing the promotion in.

How did they start out? What hardships did they go through? What's unique about them? What are their credentials? What awards have they won?

Often a supplement is fronted by an expert, usually a doctor, who may be responsible for product development. You might even be asked to write in his or her voice. If so, you'll need to know everything you can about this person. If not, compelling stories about the company's leader can become an important part of your sales strategy. What drove them to create this

product? Have they had health successes they want to share? How have their own life experiences helped drive the product?

These personal stories can be immensely powerful—like the doctor who traveled to remote deserts to find a rare herb that boosts your memory...or the researcher who was driven underground by the FDA, only to re-surface years later with an arthritis treatment that's better than the most popular mainstream drug...

Get to Know Your Prospect Forwards, Backwards and Inside Out...

Before you research the product, you need to find out as much as you can about your prospect—the 'ideal' customer you're selling to.

This is a vital part of any sales strategy. Imagine—if you try selling a stainless steel wok to a 17-year-old college student who doesn't know how to cook...but you talk to him as if he was a 40-year-old housewife with a lifetime's culinary experience...it doesn't matter how good your copy is. You've failed to understand your prospect, and your promotion won't sell.

So it's important to get this right. Knowing your prospect is vital for coming up with the right message (including sales arguments, testimonials and evidence), expressed in the right tone of voice.

Think about it. If you know your prospect really well...

You'll know which benefits will really matter to them...

You'll know which factual details they'll find interesting...

You'll know which testimonials they can relate to...

You'll know the kind of colloquial phrases that will 'click' with them...

Your copy will have the right kind of emotional impact...

You'll know how political or religious you can (or can't) be...

You'll know how to pitch your language to the general age-group of your prospects...

That's all pretty important stuff, right?

Your aim is to build a detailed picture in your mind of who you're writing to.

To do this, you need to understand the BIG picture and the SMALL picture. By BIG picture, I mean the broad demographic you're selling to. And by SMALL picture, I mean the specific prospect you're writing your promotion for.

Which brings us to the next smart strategy for getting ahead of the competition...

Understanding the Broad Demographic: The Baby Boomer Generation...

I've asked around, and something I've learned about many copywriters is this: they don't always fully understand the generation of people they're selling to...

For the next two decades at least, most of your prospects will be baby boomers. This group has some broad qualities that are worth noting— but before I describe baby boomers in detail, there's one important caveat, and it's this:

Some of the assumptions we make about baby boomers may not apply to the list you're selling to.

The rule is, always ask your client to describe in detail the specific demographic of their list (more on that in just a moment)...

So who are the baby boomers?

Baby boomers are people born during the post World War II baby boom, between 1946 and 1964.

As a group they tend to think of themselves as a 'special' generation. They grew up in a time of dramatic social change. They're often associated with a rejection of traditional values.

They were the first generation to grow up with T.V. They'll remember The Ed Sullivan Show, The Brady Bunch and Gilligan's Island (don't worry if you need to look these up!).

In 2011, an Associated Press survey found that 42% of Baby Boomers are delaying retirement, and 25% claim they will never retire.

A University of California study found about 42% of baby boomers were dropouts from formal religion, 33% had never strayed from the church, and 25% were returning to religious practice.

The most memorable events in the lives of baby boomers were the Cold War, the Cuban Missile Crisis, the assassinations of JFK, Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King, the civil rights movement, the women's movement, the Vietnam War, Watergate, the oil embargo and gas shortages.

But there are some broad differences within this group...

Older baby boomers grew up during the Vietnam War era. Younger baby boomers grew up in the late '70s and early '80s, a period of time we associate with Ronald Reagan, the assassination of John Lennon, and Live Aid.

Older baby boomers tend to be more liberal and free-spirited. They like to experiment and they have an individual streak. They often gravitate towards important social causes like environmental issues or political prisoners.

It might surprise you that younger baby boomers tend to be less optimistic. They're more distrusting of government and authority, and tend to challenge the political system more.

So how does this help you write better copy?

Some of these details can be very helpful when deciding on a sales strategy for your promotion. In Chapter 3, you'll learn about the Anti-establishment sales strategy—where the copy takes an anti-authority (for example, anti-FDA) position.

When you're considering your broad demographic, you may decide this strategy would work better for a younger Baby Boomer demographic.

Or you might want to weave relevant details like the ones above into your copy—even your headline. If you can link the suppression of a promising cancer treatment to the Watergate scandal...or a new memory-loss treatment to John Lennon's assassin—good for you! If you can make it work, go for it...

Connections like these can create intrigue in a way that is relevant to your audience. If they're done right, they can enhance the feeling of intimacy between you and your reader. And they can help build trust.

But remember, your client's prospects are much more than just baby boomers. They may be white collar or blue collar. They may have finished high-school or be college-educated. They may be conservative or more liberal. They may be Republican, Democrat or Independent. All these descriptors will play into the way you address your reader, and the details you include in your copy.

But understanding Baby Boomers is just the beginning...

As copywriters we need to know our prospect on a personal level—we need to know him or her as a person, not just a group of people...

The Prospect as a Person...vs. People..

I make a point, throughout this book, of referring to the prospect in the singular, and there's a very good reason for this...

You need to build a mental image of your ideal prospect. For a start, you must fully understand her health concerns. But you also need to know her passions, her worries about the future, what kind of lifestyle she lives, and the kind of books she reads.

And then you need to write directly to that person. Not 'Dear Friends...', but 'Dear Friend...', in the singular. As if she was standing right next to you in a bar, and you were telling her—and only her—about this incredible new product you've just heard about.

Let's take a look at how this works in more detail...

Imagine you're selling a prostate supplement. To talk to the ideal customer, to gain his trust, you'll need to know his income bracket, his education level, and what he likes doing at weekends. You'll need to know what kinds of products he buys, and even which magazines he reads.

This might seem like a lot of research—but you don't have to worry. There's a quick and easy work-around, which your client can usually provide. Simply ask for a mailing list data card, or the product's buyer profile.

“Help! What the heck's a mailing list data card?!”

A mailing list data card provides data on lists of people who have previously bought a similar product. You'll find some fascinating information on a mailing list data card, including age, gender ratios, the types of products they've purchased, and even which magazines they read.

“A Buyer Profile? What on earth's that?!”

A product's buyer profile gives you basic demographics (age, gender, income), as well as political affiliations, beliefs and opinions, net worth, and even—if you're lucky—their buying habits.

This is essential information which helps you build a complete picture of the person you're writing to—so that you write with 'insider' knowledge of her lifestyle, attitudes, interests and beliefs.

But you need to go further than this, and the first step is to understand your broad audience. For many, if not most health products today, the biggest audience out there is the 'baby boomer' generation.

What You Need to Know About Your Prospect...

As you dig deep to find out everything you can about your prospect, keep the following 10 essential questions close at hand:

My “8 Essential Buyer Profile Questions”

1. What keeps your prospect awake at night?

With a health promotion, this goes way beyond a disease or a symptom. Is the disease or health worry affecting his relationships? His work? His

interactions with his grand-children? Is it stopping him from getting out and meeting friends?

These are some of the emotional pain-points triggered by a health issue that will be of most concern to a prospect.

Think about it. If we have arthritis, we're not angry, sad or worried because our joints are inflamed. We're angry, sad or worried because we can't play golf or go swimming like we used to...or because it's embarrassing when we're out walking with our grandson and we have to turn back because of the pain...or because we can't get out to see friends, and we're getting more and more lonely...

The health issue is a trigger for a host of other lifestyle problems—and it's these problems your product aims to fix. In the same way, it's the solutions to these problems—the lifestyle benefits—that will sell the product for you...

2. What does your prospect fear the most?

With a chronic disease, death might be the first thing that comes to mind—but I'd wager to say that for most of us it's not the most important.

Worse than death is the fear of growing old uncomfortably, without our mind or body intact.

So it's important to remember—death is probably not the thing your prospects fear the most.

Is your prospect afraid of losing her memory? Or afraid of losing touch with the world because she's less mobile? Is she afraid of surgery? Or of the side-effects of over-the-counter drugs?

We'll explore copywriting emotions in detail—what they are, and how to use them—in Chapter 3. For now, it's important to know that understanding what your prospect fears can give you a deeper understanding of how your product might benefit them—by helping them overcome those fears.

In other words, it's not the fears themselves that's most important to us—it's what our product can do about them.

3. What is your prospect angry about and who is she angry at?

Buyers of health products could be angry about mainstream medicine, for failing to help them. Or they could be angry at the government, for allowing toxins into the water supply which may have led to their Alzheimer's or cancer. They could be angry about the high costs of health insurance—if so, the cost-effective product you're promoting could be the ideal solution.

Anger can be a powerful emotion in a health promotion—but it should never dominate the copy. It's used best when you're building empathy with the prospect, showing him that you understand what he's going through, so that you can gain his trust.

In the alternative health industry, a major 'anger-point' is the lack of visibility of natural treatments for chronic diseases. Many (if not most) of these are cheaper and often just as effective as mainstream drugs—but for financial and political reasons, they're much less available. So a healthy dose of anger—usually towards the FDA and the big pharmaceutical companies (Big Pharma)—can go a long way to building empathy with your prospect, who probably feels the same way.

But there's a caveat, when it comes to anger: we should never blame, or show anger towards, the doctor. It's tempting, because doctors represent and manage a health system that often gets things wrong. But doctors remain highly respected, even by your skeptical Baby Boomer readers. To blame “your doctor” would turn off many readers. When it comes to doctors, it's always wise to show your respect...

4. What frustrates your prospect the most?

Prospects can be frustrated for many reasons—some related to a health concern, some related to a treatment, and some related to lifestyle issues triggered by a health concern.

Is your prospect frustrated at having to take too many pills, instead of just one? Or because she can't get out of the house to shop or visit friends, because her back pain is playing up?

If you're writing for men, is your prospect frustrated at his dwindling sex-life, because his prostate is keeping them awake all night, and he's "just too

tired"?

Health issues lead to many frustrations beyond the immediate symptoms. You must drill down and find these, because they reveal the real reasons prospects want your product...

5. What are your prospect's most compelling desires?

Of course, every health prospect desires and needs a treatment that works—that solves a health issue or at the very least significantly eases the symptoms. That's a given.

But your prospect may also want better relationships, a better sex life, to be more productive at work or at home, to spend more quality time with her grand-children, or to play 12 rounds of golf instead of nine.

You'll need to drill down to find these deep, hidden desires. For example, why might a 70-year-old want to play 12 rounds of golf instead of nine? Maybe it's to impress his friends. Or maybe it's to feel proud, instead of ashamed, when he's playing golf with his son.

Or why might a prospect want to be more productive at home? Maybe it's so he can make life easier for his wife, who is also getting older...

Use these desires carefully in your copy, and they're bound to trigger a deeper, hidden connection with your prospect. Often it's these kinds of connections—the deep-seated benefits—that clinch a sale.

6. What are your prospect's main buying concerns?

Before he'll click the 'buy' button, and fill out his credit card details, your prospect will need to have ALL his buying concerns answered.

Is the price of the product fully justified? How will it be delivered? Is it convenient to me? Is the product really as reliable as it sounds, and how can I know this? When you tell me a supplement eases back-pain within 30 minutes, how can I be sure this will happen to me?

All these concerns are important, and they should all be addressed.

A good strategy is to put yourself in the prospect's head and heart...

Imagine you're his age, that you have his lifestyle, and that you have his health concerns. You're sitting at the computer, reading the promotion for the first time. You know you need something similar to this product, but you need to be sure it's the right one... What questions do you have? What worries you the most? What's making you hesitate?

When you've imagined all this, write down every buying concern your prospect might have...

If it's a supplement, does he need something that works faster? Does he need a guarantee that doesn't involve sending the bottle back? Is he worried about side-effects? Is he concerned about the size or taste of the capsule? Does he want something vegan? Does he need a larger dose than other products?

If it's a newsletter subscription, does he need audio access? Does he need a simple way (not too technical) to get hold of information? Does he want articles which break down the science into simple, bite-sized chunks? Does he want a website that's quickly searchable, by symptom?

7. Is there a built-in bias to the way the prospect makes decisions?

People make buying decisions in different ways—although some would argue that in general we buy emotionally and only afterwards justify our purchase rationally...

That may be broadly true—but it certainly doesn't account for everyone. And in the health market, which is saturated with products promising all kinds of health benefits, there's a lot of skepticism. Baby boomers are also a skeptical group. Which means health prospects need a lot of rational justification before they'll click the buy button.

You can address this in a number of ways...

For example, Baby Boomers tend to distrust authority. This means that a sales strategy with an anti-establishment angle can be very persuasive.

Also, some buyers are impulsive, while others are systematic. Impulsive buyers won't read every word, but they will skim-read your sub-headings—so make sure your whole sales message can be expressed through your sub-headings. We'll cover this in more detail in Chapter 3. It's another sure-fire way to get ahead of the competition—you'd be surprised how many copywriters don't do this!

Also, it may not surprise you to know that many married men don't make their own health decisions—they leave it up to their partners or wives! It can be helpful to acknowledge this in your copy.

8. Does your prospect have her own language, voice, and expressions?

Baby Boomers—unlike those born after the 1990s—know what an LP is. They'll remember cassette tapes and movies like Cool Hand Luke and The Graduate. They might use certain words—like gramophone, and picture house. And there'll be expressions they can appreciate, like “Beam me up, Scotty!” or “Dy-no-mite!”

These are all part of their experience, and therefore a part of their language...

You can bring these phrases into your copy—but sparingly. Because—more important—you need to balance this with the the “voice” you're writing in.

Often, you'll be writing your promotion in the voice of the publisher (for newsletters) or the product guru (for supplements). You need to make sure that this “voice” isn't at odds with the way your prospect speaks and understands language.

The voice of a publisher or product guru is powerful because it brings authority—and because it's probably been developed for an audience he or she knows deeply. You can usually identify this “voice” by looking back at earlier promotions. You need to get a feel for that voice and imitate it.

But above all, your “voice” should be intimate and personal. Imagine you're sitting at a bar, talking one-on-one over drinks, to your ideal prospect. How would you talk to them? What turns of phrase would you use? And what tone of voice?

The answer is: conversational. You're not lecturing. You're not even writing (even though you're writing). You're having a conversation, one-on-one, with your prospect.

Keep this in mind when you write...and you can't go wrong...

Congratulations! In Chapter 1 you've learned:

How to analyze and beat the control...

How to get hold of stacks of research without lifting a finger...

How to get the most out of interviewing your client...

The key to understanding your prospect's deepest needs...

The importance of getting deep inside the minds of the 'Baby Boomer' generation...

With just these few tools, you've already gone a long way towards becoming a top-earning copywriter for the health industry...

In the next chapter you'll learn:

My B-E-S-T headline formula—for writing winning headlines...

OBI's Law—One Big Idea to drive a promotion...

Direct & Indirect headlines—and when to use them...

Key buying emotions—and how to exploit them in your copy...

Top 10 headline approaches...

Download my free Copywriting Action Plan—more checklists, questionnaires and strategies to speed up your copywriting,

impress clients and boost sales...

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or go to:

<https://nickdaniel.leadpages.co/whc-action-plan/>

Chapter 2

27 Secrets to Writing Stunning Headlines...

You're already well on the way to becoming a top-earning copywriter. Great job! But there's still a lot to learn, and one of the most important—some copywriters say it's the most critical—skill, is the art of the headline.

Actually, it's a science as well as an art. It takes a bunch of creative thinking—but it also relies on careful analysis of your product, your prospect, and the competition.

In this chapter you'll learn 27 secrets to writing great headlines. I should say, at least 27, because there could well be more. I haven't numbered them. So let me re-phrase that: by the end of this chapter, you'll have learned at least 27 secrets to writing successful headlines.

You'll hear it over and over again in the copywriting world: the headline is the most important part of your promotion. It's where you should put 80% of your effort. If you can come up with a great headline, writing the rest of the promotion should be a breeze.

And it works the other way too. In my experience, if I find myself struggling to move a promotion forward, it's usually because there's something wrong with the 'big idea'—announced by the headline, and embodied in the lead. If

I get stuck at paragraph 10, then I know I need to go back and re-think the big idea.

So what's so important about a headline? The headline is the hook that promises the core benefit—the biggest, most important promise you're making about your product.

A great headline also arouses curiosity and intrigue. It starts to build a desire for the product. And it begins to build credibility.

So let's stop right there, and re-cap. A great headline does at least 6 crucial jobs:

It promises a core benefit

It announces a 'big idea'

It arouses curiosity

It intrigues the reader

It starts to build a desire or need for the product

And it starts to build credibility

The challenging part is, you have to do all this in about eight seconds—the average time it takes to read the average headline. I say challenging—but if you follow the advice laid out in this chapter, you should have no problem coming up with great headlines.

If you fail to do all this within eight seconds, your promotion is dead in the water. You lose the majority of readers before you've even begun.

That's why I've developed a time-trusted formula for generating unbeatable headlines. I call it my 'B-E-S-T' headline formula.

My 'B-E-S-T' (TM) Headline Formula™

For a headline to really work, it should achieve four essential goals.

A great headline should be:

Beneficial

Extraordinary

Specific

Time-sensitive

Let's take a look at each of these in turn.

Beneficial: The headline must promise a great benefit for the prospect. For a supplement which supports memory, that could mean promising that the prospect can remember the names of loved ones, or stay quick and alert in conversation. Or it could be a deeper lifestyle benefit, such as finding greater mobility (and maintaining friendships) with a supplement that treats back pain.

Extraordinary: You should be promising something that's never been seen or heard before. Something brand new on the market. In the health market, what's new and extraordinary can quickly become old. That's why it's so important to stay on mailing lists, and read every new promotion that comes in. If you don't have a grasp of what's already out there, your client will quickly realize that you're not up to date. More importantly, your prospects won't read your promotion if it doesn't teach and promise them something different, something new.

Being extraordinary also means being provocative. You must provoke your reader. Provocation is what will compel the reader to continue reading. Make them think! Make them feel! Throw something unique and unusual in their faces! Be bold! Again, the most compelling and intriguing ideas come from the deepest research. Research is the only way to find ideas that no-one else has thought of. Sometimes it's about an incredible benefit you've discovered in an obscure scientific journal. Or maybe you've found a connection between a government policy and an increase in liver cancer rates. Or maybe you've heard a patient describe an important symptom in a way that immediately piques your interest.

Specific: The claim you're making in the headline must be very specific. If you're promising that your prospect's memory will improve, how long will this take? One week? Twenty-four hours? If you're promising that a supplement will boost her immune system, then by how much? Seventy-five percent? A hundred percent? Specificity gives credibility to your

claim, and strengthens the benefit. It also makes your promise stand out from the hundreds of other promises prospects see every day in advertising.

Time-sensitive: A headline should compel the prospect to buy now, today, rather than later. To achieve this, the headline should have a sense of urgency. The prospect should be persuaded that it's in her interest to read your promotion immediately. Your promised benefit should be something they need now, today, and not in the future. The psychology here is that the buying instinct only lasts a few minutes—even a few seconds. If your prospects have read to the end of your promotion, but you haven't persuaded them that they need to take out their credit card immediately, you'll lose multiple sales.

Here are two common ways to make an offer time-sensitive:

You can start a stopwatch:

**The Arthritis
Breakthrough That
Could End Years of
Suffering in Seconds**

...or you can set a deadline:

650,000 Americans to Die
From 'Cold War' Virus
Over the Next 12 Months

Now It's Your Turn!

Now that I've explained the 4 key elements of a successful headline, see if you can identify these in a real headline.

The headline below comes from a promotion for a newsletter subscription service. Read it through carefully, and try to identify how it fits the 'B-E-S-T' headline formula. Then we'll break it apart, and look at each element:

...

Virus Alert: Lethal microbe reaches U.S. soil... enters brain in seconds... 12,400 already dead... It's America's worst-ever epidemic... and the U.S. government's deadliest secret...

650,000 Americans to Die
from 'Cold War' Virus

Over the Next 12 Months

In this shocking video:

Why the Pentagon is secretly stockpiling 9 million doses of a virus antidote last used in the Cold War...

How to cut your risk of infection by up to 80%...and destroy the virus before it reaches your brain...

And the ancient Assyrian herb that can boost your immunity by up to 700%...

...

The first thing to notice is that this headline has three sections—the 'eyebrow' (at the top), the main headline, and the sub-headings.

You don't always need all these elements. Many promotions use a main headline, and nothing else. Others use an eye-brow and a main headline, but no sub-heads. But every promotion must have a main headline.

So how is my 'B-E-S-T' headline formula applied here?

Beneficial: By announcing the threat of a new type of virus, and then offering ways to cut the risk of infection, the headline sets up a problem-solution promise. It's beneficial because it promises to show how the problem (“‘Cold War’ Virus”) can be solved (“cut your risk of infection”). Note that we're not given details yet—such as what kind of virus, or how the antidote works. All we're doing is setting up a big promise that will radically change the lives of our prospects for the better.

Extraordinary: Who knew there was a virus threat this big in the U.S? And that it's somehow connected to the Cold War? Could we be under attack? This is extraordinary information (literally 'out-of-the-ordinary'), because not many people know about it.

Notice how the the extraordinary nature of the information is emphasized by drawing attention to the Pentagon's secrecy over this matter. This detail—mentioned briefly—also creates intrigue, which helps draw the reader into the promotion.

The health promises are also extraordinary, because they appear so powerful. Boosting immunity “by up to 700%” is an unusual promise to make.

Specific: Here, the specificity comes in the numbers. “12,400”, “650,000”, “12 Months”, “80%” and “700%”.

Time-sensitive: For a health promotion, it's often the progression of an illness or disease that's time-sensitive. In this headline the virus threat is highlighted with a prediction—“over the next 12 months”. This puts

pressure on the reader to do something about the problem before he becomes one of the “650,000 Americans” likely to die.

That said, there will be other “big urgencies” related to desired benefits that may not be medical. For instance, a supplement which supports bone strength may be urgent to a reader because he desperately wants to become mobile again, so he can resume a happy social life. When it comes to urgency, his desperation to live fully again may well trump the progression of the disease.

Let's take a look at a second headline. This time, the headline is for an arthritis pain cream, and the format is a standard online sales letter.

Again, read the headline carefully, and identify how it uses the 'B-E-S-T' Headline Formula™:

...

Urgent: Stanford University biochemists reveal most bone supplements are a swindle... but there's one bone-loss solution scientists call “astounding”... First uncovered by a tribe of Australian aborigines, this formula...

puts 84% more calcium to work in your bones...

triggers the mechanism which makes calcium 'stick' ...

absorbs faster and deeper...

starts working in minutes...

Don't Be Scammed— Get Bones of Steel!

Revealed—this fast-acting bone solution will heal brittle bones...reduce the risk of fracture by 28%...and restore your confidence...

“My doctor was amazed at how much my bones healed...”

- Sally S., Arizona, U.S.A.

...

So how does this headline apply the 'B-E-S-T' Headline Formula™?

Beneficial: Overall, the headline sets up the bone-loss formula as a solution that works. It positions itself against the majority of other bone-loss supplements which (according to scientists) don't work. But it goes further—as it should. Just saying a product “works” isn't nearly enough. By listing exactly what it can do, the copy helps the formula stand out from other products. And it promises to do this “faster” and “deeper”— two promises which will be supported later in the copy.

Extraordinary: The most unique idea in the headline is that it sets up the competition as being part of a “swindle”. But notice how this claim is supported right at the top by reference to a Stanford University study. Without this support, the “swindle” claim would not be credible, and prospects would lose interest. Notice also how the headline plays on the frustration of prospects who will have used different bone-loss solutions, to no effect. Reference to Australian aborigines also helps bring out the uniqueness of the product—there's something intriguing about the way the formula was “uncovered”. This promises an interesting 'discovery' story to be revealed later in the copy.

Specific: The specificity here comes from the factual detail, as well as statistics and numbers. We're given four reasons why this bone-loss supplement is better than others. We're also given specific numbers (“84%”, “28%”).

Time-sensitive: The word “urgent” in the eye-brow, and the implication that the prospect may be using a formula that doesn't work, makes it imperative that he finds out why these supplements don't work, and how to fix the problem. Again, the need to resolve the core health issue has an inbuilt urgency. This is one reason why a prevention approach doesn't work so well. However much I wish prospects would buy into the prevention benefits of many supplements—and there are literally thousands of studies to support this—I know there's not enough in-built urgency in the prevention idea to make it into a headline. Prospects might well agree with you—but they still won't buy, because the disease you're trying to prevent is not yet a reality.

So now that we've covered my 'B-E-S-T' headline formula (TM) for creating a successful headline, what's next?

At this point, I want you to think back on promotions and advertisements you've read or seen. Which ones stick in your mind? Which ones are the most forceful? Which ads were the quickest to understand? Which ads will you never forget?

When I answer those questions, I think of Nike: Just Do It. Or I think of De Beers: A Diamond is Forever.

Chances are, the ads you're thinking of are ones which stick to a single, powerful, big idea—something so simple, it's almost impossible to forget.

One of the reasons these ads are so powerful is that they've applied a golden rule in advertising. It has many names—but in reference to the wisdom of the Jedi Master Obi-Wan Kenobi, I prefer to call it...

OBI's Law (One Big Idea)—
for Jedi copywriters...

One of the most important aspects of a great headline is that it tackles one subject, one main idea. Advertising greats like David Ogilvy called it “the Big Idea”. What's the big idea of your promotion? What's the most powerful, single overarching theme? And how can you announce this idea simply in your headline?

When you've done all your research, when you've interviewed the product champion, when you've drilled down to discover the deepest benefits of the product...and when you know your prospects as well as you know your best friend (almost)... your next step is to narrow it all down, to find the core focus of your sales strategy—your One Big Idea.

And I mean one. Not two. Not three. Just one.

This approach works for five important reasons:

It focuses your reader.

It stops your reader's thoughts from going in different directions.

It holds their attention.

It simplifies and streamlines your sales message.

It makes your sales message unforgettable.

This doesn't mean that you can't explore more benefits further down the copy. You must! But by keeping it simple, you're focusing the reader's attention, you're making your product stand out, and you're avoiding confusion—the confusion of a reader who asks, “What's it all about?”. The answer should instantly be visible in the headline.

But remember—big promises will only mean something if they are credible. Your readers, baby boomers with health concerns, are some of the hardest people to sell to. Many of them are die-hard skeptics, especially when it

comes to health treatments. That means the big claims in your headline must be worded convincingly, and must have proof.

We'll explore credibility in detail in Chapter 4, but for now, just remember that any claim, anywhere in the copy—including the headline—must be supported. Naming scientific celebrities (“Nobel prize-winning scientist reveals...”), referencing a reputable journal (“Harvard study shows...”), quoting a patient (“My pain went away in minutes...”), are all examples of providing instant credibility. Being specific can also support your credibility (but it's not everything). For example “Boosts immunity by 900%” is already more believable than “boosts immunity”.

So what does OBI's Law look and sound like?

Let's take a close look at another headline...

As you read through, try to identify the OBI Law, the One Big Idea—the theme that focuses the reader's attention and, will help to streamline the overall sales message:

...

High Court Testimony Reveals the Awful Truth:

“The FDA Kept 5 Alzheimer's Cures a Secret for 20 Years...”

Did FDA officials bury evidence to keep these natural Alzheimer's treatments from the public?

Watch the video below for all the shocking facts...

Plus discover these stunning breakthroughs today...before Big Pharma and the FDA bury them for good.

Dr. John Rutter, MD, PhD:

FDA officials “covered up” the research...

...

So what's the 'One Big Idea'? What's the key theme that focuses the reader's attention?

The One Big Idea: The One Big Idea, here, is that powerful natural Alzheimer's treatments exist, and are ready to use, but the FDA is keeping them from the public. The promotion is promising to uncover these treatments and make them available to the reader.

This is an anti-establishment headline, playing on the prospect's distrust of authority, and skepticism about mainstream medicine.

Remember, in Chapter 1, how we described Baby Boomers? Distrust of authority is a major part of the older Baby Boomer's mindset. And one of their main concerns is that medicine is often outside their control. They know they are not always privy to important decisions about their bodies and their health. That's an extremely upsetting thought for a generation of Americans who value their independence so much.

Notice also that the OBI Law (One Big Idea) is applied in two other ways—by having one driving emotion, and one core benefit.

The Core Emotion: The headline uses one key emotion—outrage—to drive the 'Big Idea', the idea that our lives are in the hands of a government institution, the FDA. By sharing outrage with the prospect, the headline is also showing sympathy, and this strengthens the feeling of intimacy between the seller and the prospect. This core emotion, outrage—combined with her curiosity about the 'One Big Idea'—will drive the prospect to read the promotion.

The Key Benefit: The key benefit for the reader will be to find out what these stunning Alzheimer's breakthroughs are, so that they and their loved ones can use them, and potentially survive—or at least slow down—Alzheimer's. Note that there are no specific details about these breakthroughs at this point—only the promise that these will be revealed. That's because there's already enough credibility—the “Grand Jury Testimony” and the “Dr. John Rutter, MD, PhD” quotation—to

ensure that readers will trust the promise of this benefit, and read on for details.

By now, you've learned all about the mechanics of a successful headline, and you're ready to put it into practice. But before you do that, there's one more important lesson to learn.

You've probably noticed that the headlines I've shown you so far are all quite different. Some are direct—with a specific benefit right up there in the headline. Some are less direct—with only the promise of a benefit. Some start with a problem, like the 'Cold War Virus' headline. Others go straight to the solution, like the 'Don't Be Scammed - Get Bones of Steel' headline.

So the big question is, how do I know which type of headline to use?

Luckily, this question has been asked—and answered—many times by top copywriters. There are two distinct types of headline. These can be broken down even further, but at this stage, it's important to make a clear distinction between...

Direct and Indirect Headlines...

Whenever I'm drafting a headline, I have a bunch of questions running through my head. If you could tune in to these conversations I have with myself, you might hear something like this:

“Why can't this pain cream headline simply state what the pain-cream can do—a single big promise, with a core benefit, such as “it soothes 90% of every kind of pain”?”

Or:

“Would this FDA headline work if I didn't directly state a core benefit of one of the “stunning” cancer breakthroughs it promises to reveal?”

Luckily, there's a quick—and relatively simple—formula for answering these questions.

Gene Schwartz, author of the marketing classic Breakthrough Advertising, first came up with this idea. Gene was an advertising genius. One ad he wrote sold 1.98 million copies of a single \$25 book. Another company earned nearly \$50 million from a promotion Gene wrote, selling a natural health publication.

The point is, his ideas really work. And one of the things he taught us about direct and indirect headlines was this:

Depending on your product, and the benefits it brings, you will have to judge your prospect's level of awareness of the product and its benefits. You can think of this as a continuum—from Least Aware to Most Aware. Your prospects will fall closer to one or the other end of the spectrum.

Least Aware Prospects

Is your customer less aware of the product, less trusting of the company, and maybe doesn't believe a solution is possible—or even know there's a problem worth solving?

If your prospect is unaware of what you're selling, of her problems and the solutions to those problems, you're going to need an indirect approach. An indirect approach eases her towards an understanding of the problem. Once she understands the problem, only then will you be in a position to sell her a solution.

So what does this mean for your lead? It means that it may be better to outline the problem first, and follow up with the solution—after you've made sure the prospect is fully aware that she has an urgent problem which must be solved right away.

In other words, instead of jumping right into the promise or benefit, you need to break the ice first.

An unaware prospect can also be highly skeptical. If that's the case, a direct approach would be suicide. You'd be making a big claim about the product without breaking down their skepticism first. The prospect wouldn't believe you, and they'd stop reading or listening.

A more indirect approach gives you plenty of opportunities to do this, before revealing the specifics of the product itself.

The “Cold War Virus” headline (above), and the FDA headline (also above), are both examples of the indirect approach.

The bone-loss headline (“Don’t Be Scammed - Get Bones of Steel”), above, is somewhere in the middle. In this case, prospects are unlikely to know exactly why their pain creams aren’t working. So it was necessary to persuade them of this before selling the product. The headline helps get them into the necessary mind-set—by making them aware of an urgent need (and the solution) they weren’t aware of before. The headline lays out the problem and hints at a solution at the same time.

Most Aware Prospects

Is your product easy to understand, with an easily accepted promise, a great guarantee, from a company the prospect knows and trusts? Does your prospect already know exactly what his problem is?

When your prospect is fully aware of the problem, and is looking for a solution, a direct headline usually works best. This is because the prospect already knows what he wants—and needs a direct and fast route to the easiest and most effective solution. A direct headline also works when your product is easy to understand.

Here are six examples of direct headlines:

...

How to live 56 percent longer

**...and still eat a ton of
sugar, pastries, creamy
sauces, and rich desserts!**

This Rare Source of Aloe

Stops Pain in Seconds

Wisconsin doctor reveals

**“jungle” extract that boosts
memory 3X in 40 days!**

Get 8 Hours of Deep Refreshing Sleep—

GUARANTEED or your money back

NO chemicals, NO side effects, NO addiction

20 Minutes to True

Back Pain Relief—

Guaranteed

Deadly Artery Plaque

Dissolved!

How to clean out your blood vessels and erase your risk of heart attack and stroke.

...

These six headlines all have one thing in common. They take a direct approach, by making the health promise the main, and often the only, focus of the headline. They do this because the copywriter understands that the prospect knows exactly what their health problem is. The prospect knows the kind of solution he's looking for—if not the exact one.

All he wants is a quick, easy solution that meets his known needs—and with these headlines, he's clearly getting it.

Notice how each of these five headlines also follows my B-E-S-T Headline Formula— they're beneficial (because they promise a solution to a specific health problem), they're extraordinary ("live 56 percent longer", "jungle extract", "artery plaque dissolved"), they're specific ("56 percent", "3X in

40 days”), and they’re time-sensitive, because the prospect wants to relieve the symptoms or solve the health problem as fast as possible.

It's also important to remember three other effective selling points for a health product. Whether it's a supplement, a pain relief cream, a weight loss pill, or a subscription service, every consumer wants the solution to be fast, cheap and easy.

In health promotions, whenever you can weave these three benefits into your big promise, your headline will be even more effective.

Arthritis Example

For example, imagine you have painful arthritis—and it's stopping you from going out, from concentrating on your work, and from enjoying your family. Wouldn't the best thing in your life right now be fast pain relief? To know that you could get rid of the pain—and have your life back—in less than 30 minutes?

Weight Loss Example

Or imagine you've been struggling with weight loss for years. You've tried every fad diet and supplement on the market. Some might work— but the results are just too slow. So slow, in fact, that you're almost in despair. Wouldn't a product that works three times faster than the most popular brand be exactly what you want, right now?

And if you look at the first direct headline, above (“How to Live live 56 percent longer...”), you'll notice it plays on a very important desire, among health prospects—that the solution be as comfortable as possible, and that it disrupts the prospect's lifestyle as little as possible. In this example, the prospect is being promised a longer life—but they can still be as naughty as they like when it comes to their eating habits!

This plays into a very important psychological hang-up most of us have—resistance to change. And one thing most people hate having to do is to change their diets. Doctors are always telling us to stop eating desserts, salt, or too much unhealthy fat. So to be told the opposite is refreshing and unique.

So What's Next?

So far, you've learned how to make a headline Beneficial, Extraordinary, Specific and Time-sensitive (my 'B-E-S-T' headline formula). You've learned ways to make sure your headlines are simple, streamlined, focused and unforgettable (OBI's Law) . And you've learned the difference between a direct and indirect headline (thanks to Gene Schwartz).

But there's still one very important component we need to address. To make a headline truly visceral—to give it the psychological impact that will trigger an immediate response in your reader—it must be emotional. And not just any emotion. I'm talking about the buying emotion—the single most powerful feeling that will drive your prospect to purchase your product.

The truth is, most people buy with their emotions. Rational arguments, though very important, come second to emotions, when a prospect is on the verge of making a buying decision. Think about it. A buying emotion—whether it's fear, hope or outrage—carries with it a history of experiences, thoughts, memories, dreams and ambitions. These 'background' experiences are triggered every time a prospect is made to feel a particular emotion. If it's grief, they're sure to be thinking of someone they love. If it's outrage at the FDA, they're sure to be thinking about the times they've been duped by authority. If it's hope, they're sure to be thinking about their own dreams and what they've done—or not done—to achieve them.

So an emotion is an incredibly powerful selling mechanism—as long as you've chosen the right one. The right emotion can leverage all those thoughts and experiences in the reader, like the loss of a loved one, or the desire to live long enough to see their grandchildren grow up, without having to mention them even once.

When we're promoting products in the health market, what kinds of emotions can we tap into?

Emotions in the Health Market

As you dig deeper into your research, you should also be building a sense of the core emotions surrounding a product and a prospect. At this point you can ask yourself these three important questions:

What is the prospect feeling right now, as she faces a potential or current health issue? Despair? Loneliness? Frustration? Anger? Shame?

What would she feel if that health problem were to vanish overnight?
Elation? Excitement? Hope? Relief? Pride?

What core buying emotion will drive the prospect to purchase the product?

The core buying emotion is sometimes the trickiest to pin down. It goes deeper than the obvious emotions a prospect might feel, and it takes some in-depth research—as well as stepping inside the prospect's shoes—to figure it out.

The best way to demonstrate this is with an example. Let's call it...

The “Prostate Hell” Scenario

Imagine you're selling a prostate supplement. You know that the worst things about an enlarged prostate are that you can't pee without pain, that you're waking up five times a night to pee, that your bladder always feels full, that you never get enough sleep, and that your sex life is suffering.

Let's imagine that your particular product—let's call it 'ProstaPlus'—contains ingredients that do three things better than the competition:

It starts working in under 30 minutes...

It helps you flush your bladder in one shot, so you don't have to make repeat visits to the bathroom...

It lasts longer, because it doesn't just relieve the symptoms. It also breaks down the toxins which are causing the prostate to swell...

Let's also imagine that we've found out the following important facts through our research:

Most products on the market take longer than 30 minutes to start working, and...

For most products, the symptoms usually come back when you stop taking the supplement.

To find the core buying emotion of this product—the emotion that will drive your headline—there are three steps you can follow:

Step 1: Drill down, and consider the emotions your prospect must be feeling. Is he frustrated that he can't get enough sleep, and his work is suffering? Is he worried about making mistakes at work, because he feels like a zombie all day? Is he upset because his problem is keeping his wife awake, and now there's tension between them, and they're fighting? Is the problem a major blow to his self-esteem, because it's destroying his sex life? Is he terrified of losing his 'manhood'? Perhaps he's also frustrated, even angry, because he's tried several other products, and they just don't work!

Step 2: Now ask, what are the emotions your prospect will feel after taking this particular product? Relief from pain? Joy at peeing everything out 'in a single flush'? Pride at feeling more like a 'real man'

again? Peace in his relationship? Excitement at getting his eight hours of sleep and having tons more energy?

Step 3: Now ask, which of these emotions, when you connect them to the biggest features and benefits of the product, will most likely drive the prospect to buy the product?

Here's the headline I created from this same scenario:

...

Prostate News: Harvard Professor says this “magical” Himalayan berry can erase your prostate pain in just 30 minutes... and attacks the hidden causes of prostate swelling for long-lasting relief... This all-in-one prostate solution could help you say...

**"At Last, I Can Pee
Like a Soda Stream!"**

INSIDE: This ancient remedy can help you flush your bladder in one shot... stop embarrassing dribbles...re-kindle your sex life...and bring back the sleep you crave...

...

The driving emotion in this headline is relief. Pain relief, and relief from the frustration of always having a full bladder. The words “At Last” also help to emphasize all the other ways in which the prospect will be both physically and emotionally relieved—but without having to spell them all out (because the prospect already knows!).

Also, notice how other emotions are built in to the headline—especially in the sub-head. These include the end of embarrassment (“stop embarrassing dribbles”) and the re-building of sexual pride (“re-kindle your sex life”).

I chose relief as the core emotion, for this headline, because I judged that this is the most immediate concern for the prospect—get this relief, and everything else will follow.

With this headline, other emotions were equally powerful—and were jostling for a front position in my mind. When that happens, always ask, “What does the prospect need immediately, right now? What's the one thing he must have before he can get any of the other emotional or physical benefits?”

To understand this, I had to imagine what was going through the mind of my prospect, in the worst moments of his pain. He's standing over the toilet, trying to pee. The pain is something awful. At that moment, he's not thinking about his sex life, or problems at work. He just wants to flush that pee out of his bladder and get rid of the pain.

Your headline needs to jump into the health conversation you know your prospect is already having—from all the research you've done. If your prospect is asking how he can beat the pain and frustration of a swollen prostate, you must enter that conversation. If their biggest fear, right now, is the loss of independence due to Alzheimer's, you need to jump right into that conversation.

The headline, “At Last, I Can Pee Like a Soda Stream!” assumes an 'insider' knowledge of the prospect's worst health concerns, and jumps right into their experience. And as with all your copy, you must speak the language of your prospect.

What are the Most Common Buying Emotions?

We've talked about emotional release, hope, joy, pride, peace, frustration and terror. These are all valid buying emotions. But the potential list is much, much longer. Consider these:

curiosity	benevolence	exhaustion	insecurity
altruism	boredom	happiness	complacency
laziness	sadness	pessimism	revenge
anger	pride	desperation	passion
patriotism	whimsy	love	loneliness
annoyance	surprise	envy	sympathy
disgust	shyness	lust	embarrassment
guilt	indifference	fear	vanity
confusion	wit	stupidity	confidence

Any one of these emotions could potentially be used to sell a product. But there is a caveat. Namely, when writing for the health market, negative emotions should be used very carefully—and here's why...

Positive vs. Negative Emotions

When writing copy for the health market, there's often a temptation to indulge in the negative emotions—especially fear. Why? Because the health stories you read—the suffering, the pain, the terrible symptoms and prognoses—can seem overwhelming.

Also, it's easier—because you don't have to think so much—to tell a compelling story when you're focusing on all those negative emotions. It's easier to sound gripping...

But beware! On the whole, your prospects will already be afraid—often very afraid. The media in particular is a hotbed of fear-mongering when it comes to chronic diseases. So you have to tread extremely carefully when selling products which treat chronic or life-threatening health illnesses.

That doesn't mean you shouldn't use fear as a driving emotion. It simply means you should always balance it with a good, strong, healthy dose of hope...

A common strategy that combines a good dose of hope with some 'healthy' fear is the fear-skepticism-hope combination.

It's a powerful combination, because it plays on the baby boomer's skepticism about mainstream medicine and their distrust of authority. But it doesn't do just that. At the same time, it offers a strong dose of hope, leading towards a happy (hopefully stunning, unique and incredible) solution to a health problem.

Here's a headline I wrote for a newsletter subscription:

...

Cancer Alert! Did the FBI raid this health clinic at gunpoint... and arrest its Yale-educated chief of staff... for curing cancer naturally?

Hush!

Not a Word!

If you even whisper about this maverick's stunning breakthrough... you too could be staring down the barrel of a gun...

I'm urging you to share these astounding cancer treatments only with your loved ones...in the privacy of your home... Including...

the cancer-killing super-nutrient discovered 2 miles under the Pacific...it destroyed liver tumors in just 7 days...

the anti-tumor herb rescued from an Egyptian tomb...It can boost cancer-killing blood cells by 650%...

and the common kitchen ingredient most people throw in the trash...It drives lung cancer tumors to self-destruct—and there are no side-effects...

...

This headline has fear (“you too could be staring down the barrel of a gun”), distrust of authority / skepticism (the idea that someone in authority has criminalized an important cancer discovery), and hope (“curing cancer naturally”, “stunning breakthrough”). The hope is strengthened by the gun threat—because if you'd be under such a threat, then this discovery must be pretty incredible!

Notice that there's just enough information to create intrigue—but not too much is revealed. The copy raises questions for the reader. It teases her instinct for a good story. It suggests a scandal, without being specific. It leaves a lot of information 'hanging'—because the most important job of a headline is to compel the reader to keep on reading. That's your number one goal.

Approaches to Writing Headlines

When you're starting to brainstorm your headline, it's helpful to use a range of different approaches. Sometimes the perfect headline will hit you right away—but sometimes you'll find yourself trying fifty, a hundred or two hundred headlines until you get the right one.

Luckily, there's a way of saving time—by following this process:

Keep your big idea / big promise / core benefit in mind...

Write a series of draft headlines based on ONE of my “10 Headline Approaches” below....

After 20 minutes, try a different approach...

Repeat, until you come up with the perfect headline...

My “Top 10 Headline Approaches”—

how to create the perfect headline in record time...

1. Try speaking directly to your reader:

**Who ELSE Wants to ...
...have the memory of a 25-year-old...
...the heart of an athlete...
...and lose 4 kilos in a week?**

2. Try connecting to a political or newsworthy issue:

**650,000 Americans to Die from
'Cold War' Virus
Over the Next 12 Months**

3. Try using an intriguing word or phrase:

Hush! Not a Word!

4. Try making a deal with the reader:

**Give Me 15 Days and I'll Help You
REVERSE YOUR HEART DISEASE
Without Dangerous Drugs...**

5. Try telling a Compelling Story:

**“Suffering a Living Hell!”
All because of a little white pill...**

6. Try putting it in your reader's voice:

**“At Last, I Can Pee
Like a Soda Stream!”**

7. Try dropping a big name:

**When Obama Promised to Cure Alzheimer's,
We Thought It Was Just Another Sound Bite...**

8. Try addressing your prospect's dominant emotion:

**Finally, My Prostate Shame
Is Over...**

9. Try creating or solving a mystery:

**5 Deadly Cancer Secrets
the FDA Doesn't Want You to Know...**

10. Try exposing a scandal:

**Exposed!
The Chemotherapy**

Swindle!

Finally, a quick word about the length of a headline...

Many first-time copywriters ask how long a headline should be—and top copywriter's give them many different answers. My answer? It's the same answer for how long should a promotion be, and that is: as long as it takes.

I've seen three word headlines succeed. I've seen a 17-word headline do equally well. That's pushing the upper limit—but if it takes that many words to establish your message, then those are the words you need to use.

Congratulations! In this chapter, you've learned:

My B-E-S-T headline formula—for writing winning headlines...

OBI's Law—One Big Idea to drive a promotion...

Direct & Indirect headlines—and when to use them...

Key buying emotions—the emotions that drive sales...

My top 10 headline approaches...

In the next chapter, you'll learn:

How to write a compelling lead...

How to fill your lead with intriguing copy...

The top 6 health promotion sales strategies and how to use them

How to insert gripping stories into your sales strategy

The all-important balance between 'Picture' and 'Proof'

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Chapter 3

How to Turn a Great Sales Strategy into a Winning Lead...

Congratulations. You've learned how to write a great headline—and that puts you ahead of 95% of copywriters out there. That's a rough estimate, but you get my meaning. Most of the headlines I see out there—across all kinds of advertising—are just plain awful. Clever, maybe. But effective? Probably not.

So you've got your prospect hooked on an idea. You've got her to actually start reading your promotion—instead of clicking off it, or—if it's on paper—throwing it in the trash.

You've also done much more than that. You've got your prospect hooked on a sales strategy—an overall angle, a way of “spinning” the product—that you'll now establish more firmly, and even more persuasively, throughout the body of the promotion.

The lead is simply the next step in your sales strategy. It's the copy right below the headline, and leading right up to the offer, that will flesh out your One Big Idea, with scientific evidence, testimonials, gripping stories (more on those in a moment) and a ton of benefits.

I spend roughly 80% of my time developing the headline and lead. Most of that time is spent researching, thinking, and trying out headlines. Because what I'm actually doing—while doodling on scraps of paper, testing out phrases in Evernote, re-reading studies, and trying to feel what the prospect feels—is developing a sales strategy.

This is why most clients ask for your headline and lead before you begin writing the rest of the promotion. If your client doesn't like your headline and lead, this means they don't think your sales strategy is going to work. If that happens, the game's off, and it's back to square one.

And by square one, I mean you're either going to be starting a new headline...or finding a new client.

So that headline and lead need to be the best promotional material you've ever written. Period.

How to Develop a Winning Sales Strategy

Finding a great sales strategy is a little like taking a photographic portrait. You need to spend time deciding how you'll present your model. What light will you use? Will you take the picture in color or black and white? Will you show your model head-on or from the side? What will they be wearing—or holding? What emotions do you want them to express?

Developing a sales strategy is very similar. You have to decide how to present the product. This 'presentation of the product' is your sales strategy. It doesn't matter what the product is—a heart supplement, a health newsletter, even a digitally-controlled wheelchair—there are literally dozens of sales strategies you could use.

But in the alternative or natural health market, there are 6 sales strategies that I find myself coming back to again and again.

My Top 6 Health Market Sales Strategies— and how to turn them into gripping leads...

There are 6 sales strategies that stand out in the health market. Understand them, and you'll see how they can be used to develop strong headline ideas and compelling and persuasive leads...

The 'Get Well Again' Strategy

The 'Cancel Out Pain' Strategy

The 'Rejuvenate-Revitalize' Strategy

The 'Anti-establishment' Strategy

The 'Amazing New Discovery' Strategy

The 'Surprising Re-discovery' Strategy

Depending on which strategy you choose, that strategy will drive the headline and the lead. It should then be touched on, like a thread linking all your ideas, research, testimonials and stories together, throughout the rest of the copy. Many copywriters call this the 'golden thread' - because it relies on threading your One Big Idea throughout the sales copy, connecting everything together.

Before we look at each strategy, there's one other thing you need to consider before you pick a strategy. Remember Gene Szwartz and the levels of awareness? When choosing a sales strategy, you'll need to consider the awareness-rule we discussed in Chapter 2. How aware is your prospect that their health problem exists, and how aware are they of the potential solution?

The first two strategies (“Beating a Health Problem” and “Pain Eradication”) are usually the most direct. They work well with prospects who know what their problem is, and have a clear idea of how it might be solved. But remember what we said in Chapter 2: if a prospect is skeptical, or if the product is complex, or if you need to build trust and “break more ice”—then you'll need a less direct approach.

How you decide on a sales strategy depends on a range of factors, including your USP (Unique Selling Point), your customer profile, your core benefit and emotion, and your prospect's product awareness.

Now let's look at each strategy in turn.

The 'Get Well Again' Strategy

With this strategy, you're taking a specific health problem and making the solution (the treatment, easing of symptoms, or the complete cure) the driving force of your headline and lead.

This means your headline must promise the solution, and your lead should provide stories and scientific evidence to prove it.

But as we mentioned earlier, your prospect is very likely already aware of the potential solutions on the market—which is why it's so important that you make the solution unique.

With most treatments, there are different elements, or different parts. For example, most supplements contain a range of ingredients. Your headline and lead be driven by the product as a whole, but remember OBI's Law (One Big Idea)? A headline is often more powerful if it's driven either by a single ingredient or by a specific health issue.

You'll see many health promotions that lead with a single ingredient, develop the benefits of this ingredient in the lead, and then move on to the product as a whole—with a breakdown of all the benefits of all the other ingredients, lower in the copy. In these cases, the headline and lead are driven by the healing power of a single ingredient.

In other cases, the core healing benefit could come from a unique combination of ingredients. As we discussed in Chapter 1, ingredients can be combined to speed up the healing effects, to increase potency, or to make an ingredient more bio-available.

Important Note: There are different regulations, for supplements and newsletters, when it comes to the claims you can make about health issues. That's why I've called this strategy "Beating a Health Problem" and not "Beating a Disease". Because with supplements, there are specific regulations about what you can or cannot say about diseases.

Here's an example of a sales strategy that simply and directly emphasizes the product's ability to beat a health problem:

...

The New Pill That Can End Memory

Loss Is Now

15X More Powerful!

...

Notice how the headline is simple, direct, and to the point. Here, there's an assumption that the prospect is fully aware of the problem she has, and the kind of solution she's looking for. The key promise here is very big—that the treatment is fifteen times more powerful. It's a bold promise to make,

but as long as it's supported in the lead, what more does your prospect want? All they want, right now, is to end their arthritis pain, and get back to being fully mobile and independent. That's what this headline promises.

The 'Cancel Out Pain' Strategy

With this strategy, the eradication of pain becomes the driving force of your promotion. Your headline will promise to erase pain, and preferably quickly (“Arthritis Pain Gone in 30 Minutes”).

But again, your prospect will probably know that there are many products which make a similar promise, so you need to go further, and find evidence that your product does something that no-one else does.

Again, your lead should provide as much proof as it can to support the big promise made in the headline.

Here's a simple, direct “pain eradication” headline:

...

How an ancient Indian flower helps men and women

Rub Pain Out of Your Body

and all you need is sand and a glass of water...

...

The 'Rejuvenate-Revitalize' Strategy

This sales strategy covers several areas, when it comes to positive health experiences. Greater energy is one of them. The anti-aging angle is another. And a third—a little different from anti-ageing—is the longevity approach.

It's worth making a caveat here. Many multi-vitamin supplements can be seen as preventing or slowing the onset of health issues like heart disease, high blood pressure or Alzheimer's. Prevention can seem an obvious—and easy-to-prove—angle, but beware: in my experience, the idea of 'prevention' on it's own sells much less well than other strategies. Use it, but sparingly, and never make it the core sales strategy in a promotion.

One alternative is to consider these products as anti-aging products. They turn back the clock. They make you feel younger. They give you back a

lifestyle you had twenty years ago. But to do this, your research must uncover specific anti-aging properties in one or more ingredient.

Another is to consider them as longevity products. They add years to your life. They give you time to do things you didn't think were possible. Copywriters often combine the anti-aging and longevity angles, as they are so closely related.

The greater energy angle is another possible strategy. Many products are designed specifically for this. With others, it may not be the intended 'core benefit', but could well become your USP, especially if your research uncovers scientific evidence proving that one of the ingredients provides this benefit in a big way. Many sex supplements are sold using the greater energy angle—with the implication that greater energy leads to greater libido and better, and longer, sex. But there are dozens of products out there which include ingredients that drive energy— whether it's mental energy (helping the prospect think faster, and younger), sexual energy (leading to a better sex life), muscular energy (helping the prospect regain the strength of their youth) or even heart energy (helping the prospect get back to a more physically demanding lifestyle).

Here's an example of a “revitalization” headline. In this case, the big idea is anti-ageing, and the sub-head introduces benefits related to greater energy and longevity:

...

Has this 92-year-old “medical maverick” created...

THE ANTIDOTE TO AGING?

This controversial doctor's youth-promoting formula contains clinically tested breakthroughs to help keep your vision sharp...your brain quick... your heart strong...and add healthy, happy years to your life...

...

Notice how this headline promises an intriguing story—something about a “medical maverick” who may have done something incredible.

The 'Anti-establishment' Strategy

The anti-establishment strategy is common when selling newsletter subscriptions—partly because many publishers focus on 'underground' health treatments which are outside the mainstream. Often these treatments have actually been suppressed or held back by the FDA, or by Big Pharma. Both of these are prime targets for an anti-establishment strategy. Many newsletter publishers position their business in precisely this way—as a healthier alternative to the terrible medical errors being made by mainstream medicine or big business.

Another important reason why you would use an anti-establishment strategy is when you judge that your prospects are anti-authority and highly skeptical of mainstream medicine.

But there's one important caveat. Being anti-establishment doesn't mean being anti-doctor. After all, doctors know as much as they're told— and there are higher authorities, like the FDA, and the big pharmaceutical companies, who can be blamed for putting out drugs that kill people, or failing to approve drugs that do a better job of saving lives. If you do the research, you'll find more than enough evidence to support these claims.

But another important reason for not blaming the doctor is that despite everything your prospect may know about mainstream medicine, doctors are still highly respected members of our communities. As they should be, because—on balance—they do a fine job of keeping us all in good health.

Let's look at some examples of the anti-establishment strategy. We've already seen this headline, but let's look at it one more time, and see if you can identify what makes it anti-establishment:

...

High Court Testimony Reveals the Frightening Truth:

“The FDA Kept 5 Alzheimer's Cures a Secret for 20 Years...”

Did U.S. officials bury evidence to keep these natural Alzheimer's treatments from the public?

Watch the video below for all the shocking facts...

Plus discover these stunning breakthroughs today...before Big Pharma and the FDA bury them for good.

Dr. J— R—, MD, PhD:

FDA officials “covered up” the research...

...

First, who is being blamed, and for what? The FDA and “U.S. officials” are the culprit here. They're being accused of burying evidence, to stop you (the prospect) from getting hold of “stunning breakthroughs” in Alzheimer's research. Note the in-built urgency—that you must get these breakthroughs “today...before Big Pharma and the FDA bury them for good.”

A strategy like this makes the prospect feel like you're on their side. The prospect is a victim of mistakes made by a higher authority—and you, the writer, completely sympathize with her plight, and are here to help.

With an anti-establishment headline, there are two opposite emotions at play. They make the prospect feel uncomfortable and comfortable at the same time. Uncomfortable, because you've revealed a problem they didn't know they had (which they're now eager to see a solution for). But they're also comfortable, because you've confirmed a suspicion that they already had—namely, that those in authority are not to be trusted.

This is a key element of the anti-establishment strategy—to make the prospect feel vindicated in their suspicions. By doing this, you also strengthen your relationship with your reader by establishing a shared sentiment, and this gives you added intimacy.

The 'Amazing New Discovery' Strategy

Some of the most powerful health promotions are the ones which reveal a medical discovery that's never been seen before. Ideally, you want to find a discovery that's just been announced—in a medical journal, or by researchers in interviews—but which hasn't yet reached mainstream media. It needs to be completely new, and completely unique.

But this isn't as hard as you might think. You don't have to wait around for someone to discover a cure for liver cancer, or a new heart disease drug. Your discovery might be unique for completely unexpected reasons.

Take a look at the headline below. Why would this be considered a “New Discovery” sales strategy?

...

Excavated after 4,400 years... from the tomb of a Babylonian hand-
maiden...

The Secret Cancer Cure the FDA Doesn't Want You to Know About

Backed by a Nobel prize-winning study the American Association for
Cancer Research calls “incredible”...

Boosts cancer-killing blood cells 547%...

Shrinks tumors in five days...

But if the FDA had its way you'd be none the wiser!

...

So what's the “New Discovery” strategy here? The discovery is the 4,400-year-old cancer treatment discovered in the Babylonian handmaiden's tomb. In this case it's a two-part discovery—the discovery of the body, but also the discovery that the tomb contained an anti-cancer treatment used at least 4,000 years ago.

Note that the age of a treatment—the fact that it was used in ancient times—also helps lend credibility. But it must also be supported by modern science, as in this headline (“It boosts cancer killing blood cells 547%”). The fact that an ancient treatment has been found to be extremely effective by modern scientists makes it doubly intriguing.

But a powerful sales strategy doesn't always have to rely on these 'big' connections. Here's a simpler, shorter “discovery” headline, which focuses on just one core benefit:

...

Healthier Joints in 15 Days or Less

Nobel scientist reveals the shocking discovery that makes it possible...

...

This headline is simple, to the point, and relies on one big idea to capture the reader's attention. Remember the simplicity rule we covered in Chapter 2? In a health promotion, this kind of direct simplicity can be very powerful.

The 'Surprising Rediscovery' Strategy

This is similar to Strategy #5—except that in this case, the discovery happened in the past, was subsequently forgotten (or, as often happens, was ignored), and is now making a come-back.

In some cases, this can be combined with an anti-establishment strategy. For example, when a powerful herbal discovery was made years ago, but was outlawed by the FDA, only to be found to be completely safe decades later. In this case, it's a rediscovery—but only because the FDA stopped the original discovery from seeing the light of day.

In other cases, the discovery might simply have faded from view, lost popularity, or lost media attention. Colloidal silver—a natural antibiotic—was discovered at the turn of the twentieth century. But in the late 1930s, research on this powerful treatment was set aside in favor of more lucrative 'Big Pharma' drugs. Then in 1991 it was 're-discovered' when the FDA announced it could still be marketed. This is a perfect example of re-discovery.

Here's an example of a headline which uses the “re-discovery” strategy:

...

**In 1899, did a small-town scientist from Iowa
discover the secret to the IQ of Einstein?**

**INSIDE: The mind-blowing Alzheimer's secret the U.S. government
covered up for 116 years...**

...

You'll notice I've demonstrated each sales strategy with a headline—but how do you launch into the lead in a way that stuns, shocks or intrigues the reader? You've moved your prospect from the headline to the first sentence—but how do you move him from the first sentence to the second...or from the first paragraph to the ones that follow...?

One great way to do this is to start with a riveting story. A story with heroes (or villains) and a page-turning plot. The power of stories, in copywriting, cannot be overestimated. I've used stories about brilliant scientists, government cover-ups, incredible cures, and heroic researchers battling mainstream medicine.

I've even started a promotion with a story about a neolithic hunter— frozen in the Alpine ice—who was carrying (in an animal-hide medicine pouch) a potential cure for cancer.

So why do I feel so strongly about stories? I love writing them, for one thing—and like billions of others on the planet, I love reading them. But it isn't just personal. There's solid science behind the ability of a good story to win over prospects and drive them towards a sale...

The Selling Power of Stories

In a recent psychology experiment at Princeton, researchers found that telling stories helped to synchronize the brain patterns of the story-teller and the listener. Put simply, it got them “in synch”. Sharing a story puts people in brain-to-brain synchronicity.

In other words, psychologists are telling us that stories connect people, and build common empathy and desire—and that's exactly what you want to do with your prospect. You want them to feel the way you do (about the product). You want them to trust you.

When you relate someone's desires through a story, those desires become the desires of your audience. And that's exactly what you want to do with your prospect—get them on your side, thinking and feeling the way you do about your product and its benefits.

Also, a good story is addictive. Have you ever caught yourself flicking channels on the T.V.—when you meant to go do a household chore— and finding you can't look away? In most cases, it's because you're hooked on a story, and you for some reason you just have to get to the end.

It's the same with stories in a health promotion. If you choose the right story, and tell it in a gripping way, the end-game of your story—the resolution—will be the health solution your prospects most desire. They'll be so addicted to a solution, they'll just have to read to the end.

The world of health is filled with intriguing, heart-lifting stories.

I've already mentioned the neolithic hunter, trapped under the ice for 5,300 years, who was discovered with a medicine pouch containing a cure for cancer...

If you dig deep into your research, you'll find hundreds more stories like these...

Like the story of the Jewish doctor, smuggled out of a Budapest ghetto as a baby, who later unlocked the secrets of addiction...

Or the 10-month-old baby who survived brainstem glioma, which is usually fatal. Doctors told her parents to take her home to die—but after she was given a natural treatment blacklisted by the FDA, not only was she cured, but she went on to celebrate her eighteenth birthday...

Or the 12 men, aged 61 to 81, who were given a natural compound which transformed their flabby, frail bodies into their sleeker, younger selves in just 6 months—like a scene from the movie Cocoon...

There are stories of scientific discoveries...stunning cures...maverick researchers battling authority...and ancient medicine-men treating ailments modern scientists are nowhere near curing...

There are stories of researchers traveling through jungles and fighting off tigers to bring you rare compounds that treat heart disease or liver cancer better than pharmaceutical drugs...

Occasionally you might use a negative story—but only to demonstrate the power of a much better alternative. And in the world of alternative health publishing and marketing, that's a major selling point.

This includes stories about mainstream drugs with terrible side-effects, pharmaceutical drugs that maimed or even killed, breakthrough herbal treatments that were blacklisted by the government, or maverick physicians who were arrested for treating patients—successfully and safely—with a compound that was banned.

Of course, you have to prove every claim you make. If you can prove this banned compound is actually safe and extremely effective, and is used in a dozen other countries—then you have a winning story...

But remember, the negative problem must be balanced with a positive solution. If your story is about an arthritis drug with terrible side-effects, then a core benefit of your product will be a natural arthritis treatment with no side-effects...

If your story is about a maverick scientist chased down by the FBI for treating patients with a banned compound, then you must be able to show that this compound has been proven safe and effective, and can be obtained legally (perhaps in a different form, or from other countries)...

The D-I-G Strategy—3 Secrets to Writing a Gripping Story

So how do we write compelling stories? When developing a story I think about three key elements: Detail, Intimacy and Grippers

Detail: Often it's well-chosen details that make a story unusual, strange, exciting or extraordinary. The scientist who performed 40,000 autopsies a year. The brain tumor patient who dreamed of being a pilot. The maverick oncologist whose clinic was invaded by the FBI at gunpoint— and how his telephone was accidentally shot right off the wall. Details which emphasize the senses—sight, smell, taste, sound, touch—also help create a vivid picture in the reader's mind, giving the story more emotional impact and making it hard to forget.

Intimacy: Imagine you're in the prospect's living room, sitting by a warm fire, telling her your story. You're talking to one person only, making her the centre of your attention. You'll use the word 'you' often. You'll invite her to visualize the scene. You'll pause at a key moment

and say, “Can you imagine?”. You'll remind them why the story is relevant to their life, to their health issues.

Grippers: The aim of a 'gripper' is to make your reader grip the edge of her seat in anticipation. You want to make her desperate to know how the story unfolds—but keep her in that state of anticipation for as long as you can. You can do this in the way you break up sentences and paragraphs. Or you can achieve it by holding back key details until you absolutely need them.

Take a look at the story, below. See if you can pick out the techniques I use to keep the reader intrigued, and to build a feeling of intimacy and trust between the writer and the reader:

...

Dear Reader,

What I'm about to tell you has only been heard by a select group of scientists—until today.

Deep in the Peruvian jungle, buried under the ruins of an ancient temple, explorers have made an extraordinary discovery.

Beneath the crumbling walls, scientists uncovered the 2,500-year-old tomb of 6-year-old boy. And next to the half-decayed body...in a small box made of palm leaves...

...was an ancient healing formula which could change the course of medical history.

A Nobel prize-winning scientist claims it's the best protection against Alzheimer's he's ever seen...

Researchers from Stanford and Yale believe this incredible find could help us win the war against a disease we thought was unstoppable. Even the Journal of the American Medical Association agrees...

...this ancient healing formula could stop memory loss in its tracks...and give a fuzzy 60-year-old brain...the sharp-thinking 'smarts' of a 25-year-old...

...

So how does the telling of this story use the D-I-G strategy?

Detail: When I describe the discovery of the 'healing formula', I slow the description down—dwelling on details like the “crumbling temple”,

“decayed body” and “box made of palm leaves”. Details like these are unusual, and spark interest. They create a vivid picture—highly visual — in the reader's mind.

Intimacy: I used the second person (“you”). I gave the prospect the sense that she's being let in on a secret (“what I'm about to tell you...”). I make her feel that in doing so, she's becoming part of an inner circle of savvy 'knowers'.

Grippers: I use short paragraphs, and try to make each one a mini cliffhanger. This creates suspense, and a sense that we are leading to a discovery. I also highlight a specific demographic (“60-year-old brain”). This makes it personal, giving it the “me-factor” for the reader. Talking of cliff-hangers, the use of ellipses (...) at the end of a sentence is also a useful tool to lead the reader's eye forward to the next paragraph—but it shouldn't be overused.

The world of health and medicine is filled with stories of maverick scientists. Who doesn't love the story of the slightly mad—but brilliant—scientist, battling authority to do good for ordinary people? Here's an example which uses the “re-discovery” sales strategy, by highlighting a discovery that was made in the past, and then ignored for more than a century. It also takes an anti-establishment tone.

...

Here's the second secret:

The real cause of heart disease was discovered back in the 19th century—but was ignored by scientists for more than 150 years. Modern research is only just starting to uncover the truth...

Call it a conspiracy, a cover-up or just plain medical error... but here are the facts...

In the 1860s, a little-known German pathologist, Carl von Rokitansky, discovered what really causes heart disease. But his findings were shunned and ignored for more than a century...

Over 45 years...working seven days a week...Rokitansky dissected more than 30,000 dead bodies. And what he discovered...went against all medical thinking at the time.

Rokitansky found that heart disease is not controlled by cholesterol levels, but by an organ in the body most scientists pay little or no attention to, even today...

...

And finally, here's a story related to a heart health product. It's aim was to emphasize the negative side-effects of statins—so that the benefit claims

which followed, about the much safer natural alternative, would be even more powerful:

...

At 63, John had a clean bill of health. His blood pressure was normal. His cholesterol was healthy. He'd passed a treadmill test with flying colors...

But he had a family history of heart disease—so doctors put him on Simvastatin. From that moment, his life took a downward spiral...

Within a few days, John was feverish. Next, he began shaking. Then he started to vomit. A week later an ambulance rushed him to hospital—with acute renal failure.

John never got better. He had terrible nightmares. Anxiety. Thumping headaches. And then, without warning, it got much worse. John suffered a stroke...

...and neurologists said it was caused...not by high cholesterol or high blood pressure...but by the toxicity of the statins...

Can you imagine? John used to be a computer programmer. He could do complex maths equations in his head. But now, his wife has to help him

take a shower and get dressed...

He can't even log on to a computer, let alone drive a car...

Since then the FDA has banned Simvastatin—after it killed 416 people. But other statins still on the market have the same terrible side-effects...

...

Stories can also be powerful purveyors of empathy—bringing you closer to your prospect, and making him feel understood. Here's an example of a story for a prostate supplement promotion:

...

Dear Friend,

Secretly, it's driving you mad. The pain of peeing is so bad—so burning—you could scream...

You've tried everything, but nothing works...

You're still waking five times a night...stumbling to the john...for nothing but a tiny trickle...

...and now you're a cranky, sleep-deprived, washed-out zombie...

Believe me, I know how bad it gets. It happened to one of my best friends. His prostate nightmare was so awful, he did something a little crazy...

He paid \$12,000 for a Ford Transit mini-van, ripped out the back seats, and installed a portable toilet. Just so he could stop... to pee... on his way to work.

I'll never forget how he described the pain. "It's like trying to squeeze a watermelon through the tip of your penis", he said.

Ouch!

But what if I told you it doesn't have to be this way? That there's a new prostate treatment that blows everything else out of the water?

That you won't have to carry around your shameful secret anymore. And you won't have to spend \$12,000 on a mini-van!

Imagine the pure joy of flushing your bladder in a single surge— with no pain, and no embarrassing dribbles...

Imagine the relief of knowing your bladder is completely empty—so you can stay focused on the things that matter, like the dinner conversation with your friends, or the portfolio stocks you're managing...

Imagine a deep, 8-hour slumber, every night, next to your 'better half'—so you wake up refreshed...no more brain fog... to start the day focused and alert...

Imagine worry-free long-distance flights—without the fear of pee-panics during take-off or landing...

Imagine taking long cross-country road trips, watching a full-length movie at the Cineplex, or playing 18 rounds of golf—and never once worrying about where the bathroom is...

Imagine swimming 30 lengths without dribbling in the pool—or worse, having the uncontrollable, bladder-bursting urge for a full-on pee...

Imagine sweet, intense love-making with your partner—and ejaculating with orgasmic pleasure, instead of burning pain...

...

Notice how the shared pain is immediately followed by relief—but the relief isn't expressed as scientific features of the product. These are the deepest lifestyle benefits the prospect will attain. Scientific evidence will come lower down in the copy—once you've instilled an indelible picture of the core promises, with all their positive and uplifting emotions, in your reader's mind.

In this example, I've repeated the word “imagine” over and over— because it's impossible to describe the benefits of a product too much. By doing this, you're creating a vivid picture of the lifestyle benefits—the deeper benefits—in your reader's mind. Experience also shows that longer bullet-lists like these—as long as they emphasize the benefits in a powerful way—work better than shorter lists.

How to Build Intimacy with Your Prospect

There are several different ways to build intimacy with your prospect. You'll notice we've mentioned—and illustrated—some of them in the examples in this chapter. But because intimacy so important—as a way of building trust—here are 6 key 'intimacy techniques' you can use in any health promotion:

1. Intimate voice: By using an intimate tone of voice—as if you were talking (not writing) to a friend in a bar, or sitting by a warm fire—you

immediately break down the formal distance between writer and reader.

2. 'Special Group' mentality: By including your prospect as part of a special group, you can make him or her feel special. For example, telling your prospect that “You're one of the first to know” about this special offer... Or by pointing out that “We've chosen to write to you because...”, you're showing your prospect that she or he is important and unique.

3. Revelations: You can build intimacy by offering your prospect new and surprising information. Unexpected or exotic facts can make the reader feel closer. This is partly because the information is fascinating, but also because—in general—readers like to be taught new and important information. “Did you know that almost every American—including the President—is deficient in Vitamin K2?” would be an example of this. If you can make your reader feel smarter—by teaching them something new—they will be grateful. You can even turn this into a selling point: “With all this up-to-the-minute research, you'll be able to amaze your friends, family and colleagues with essential health facts even your doctor may not know...”

4. Setting your prospect apart: You can set your prospect apart, and make them feel lucky or relieved or special, by differentiating them from an 'undesirable' group. For example, you can tell her: “You'll no longer be one of those stressed people, scared out of their wits every time they go in for a check-up. Instead, after taking (this product), you can expect your doctor to be amazed when he sees your results.”

5. Common weakness: If you can show that you have a weakness, or problem, in common with your prospect, this can also bring you closer, and achieve greater intimacy. You could say: “A few years ago, I was in your shoes. I had aching joints, I couldn't get out of the house, and I was losing touch my friends. But that changed when...”

Finally...

If you follow all these tips—for building a solid sales strategy and writing compelling stories, you'll instantly achieve 6 hot-button health-copy goals:

You'll strengthen sympathy and empathy with your prospect, which leads to greater trust...

You'll build intimacy with the reader, with a shared understanding of a health problem, and a shared desire for a solution...

You'll emphasize uplifting emotions, especially hope and optimism...

You'll keep the reader intrigued, and wanting to read more. As with any good story, your reader will be eager to find out what happens next!

You'll teach the reader new information, making them feel smarter, and making them want to share these stories with their friends, loved ones or colleagues...

And you'll build a compelling picture of the positive life-changes your prospect will experience when they buy the product...

Stories also help to balance your promotion—and the balance I'm talking about is between two core elements of a great sales letter: picture and

proof...

Picture—means building a strong visual and emotional image of how the prospect's life will be transformed by the product. The “Imagine” bullets above are all examples of this.

Proof—means providing every piece of evidence you can find, and presenting it in an exciting and persuasive way, so that the prospect will trust you, have every doubt broken down and erased, and come to believe whole-heartedly in your product.

We'll cover everything you need to know about building proof in a health sales letter in the next chapter...

Great job! In this chapter, you've learned:

How to write a compelling lead...

How to fill your lead with intriguing copy...

The top 6 health promotion sales strategies and how to use them...

The D-I-G strategy—for inserting gripping stories into your copy...

The importance of empathy and intimacy...

The all-important balance between ‘Picture’ and ‘Proof’...

In the next chapter you'll learn:

How to build a persuasive scientific argument to prove your benefit claims...

How to source and use case histories, clinical trials and research studies...

My 6 top health credibility hacks...

How to identify the most reliable studies...

What to look for in a study—and where to find it...

How to present the evidence—so that your prospect is persuaded and intrigued...

The power of the “Big Tease”—and how to use it...

Download my free Copywriting Action Plan—more checklists, questionnaires and strategies to speed up your copywriting, impress clients and boost sales...

[Click here for your free Copywriting Action Plan](https://nickdaniel.leadpages.co/whc-action-plan/)

or go to:

<https://nickdaniel.leadpages.co/whc-action-plan/>

Chapter 4

How to Build Watertight Credibility and Win Over the Skeptics...

Let's imagine...

You're starting a new project... You've interviewed the product “guru”...
You have all the product specs...

If it's a supplement, you know what the ingredients and doses are....And if it's a newsletter, you know which premiums you'll use to sell your product...

From this point forward, your most important credibility challenge is to convince your prospect of the absolute truth of your medical and scientific claims.

I shared this in Chapter 1, but it's worth repeating. Thorough research is essential for 4 main reasons:

You need to make sure every claim you make is absolutely watertight...

You need to dig deep, to find those ‘golden gems’ of information that will amaze, intrigue or shock your readers...

You need to uncover the greatest benefits of your product, so that you can turn them into incredible promises that no-one else has ever made...

You need to find the deeper connections that will help drive your big idea, to create the most powerful headline and lead you possibly can...

As you research, it's a good idea to keep all 4 of these 'research goals' in mind. You might be reading a case study, looking for a positive result that supports a benefit (such as “ingredient X lowered the rate of heart disease by 96%”)...and suddenly you come across a big idea (“ingredient X is secretly stockpiled by the Chinese government to protect against nuclear attack...”)

Or you might be researching a specific benefit (“ingredient Y helps the over 60s play soccer...”) and instead you discover some intriguing piece of information (“ingredient Y is used by George Clooney and the Queen of England...”)

Quick Research Tip: For this reason, I find Evernote one of the best apps. of all time for taking notes while doing research. You can tag items in dozens of ways ('big idea', 'benefit', 'gem'... or 'heart disease', 'prostate cancer', 'arthritis'.... or by ingredient... and so on...). It makes research much less time-consuming...and you have every piece of information instantly available, when you start writing your promotion. That's just a quick tip—but a massively important one.

How to Build Credibility—

and make sure your product claims are 100% watertight

So how do you build credibility in a health promotion...so that your scientific claims are completely watertight...and so that even the biggest skeptic is totally convinced...?

You can build credibility in 6 distinct ways. I call them My Top 6 Credibility Hacks:

Offer evidence from clinical studies

Give details from case studies and patient medical records (if already openly available)

Tell real-life healing stories

Mine product testimonials for great quotes

Spotlight the product “guru”

Exploit the power of celebrity

First, we'll look at each of these in turn. Then we'll learn how to present this evidence in persuasive and simple ways.

1. Offer Evidence from Clinical Studies

Where can I find the best clinical studies? Which ones are more reliable? How do I use the information in a study? How do I make that information exciting and easy to understand? These are the key questions, when looking at medical journals.

When you're researching a health product of any kind, you'll spend a lot of time reading medical journals. But it doesn't have to take up all your time. There are 4 fast-track tips you can use to extract persuasive, relevant and reliable information without getting lost in a library of information, and without wading through pages and pages of text.

Fast-track Tip #1—Search for studies on Google Scholar

Google Scholar is Google's specialized search engine devoted to scholarly journals. Which means everything you find there will come from a reputable source, like the New England Journal of Medicine (NEJM), or the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA).

You'll find Google Scholar at <http://scholar.google.com>

Often it's also useful to search a specific journal, especially when it's devoted to a narrow medical niche—for example the Archives of Osteoporosis, or the Journal of Immunology.

And here's another important tip: Some of the most helpful evidence I've found has come from non-U.S. sources—for example the International Journal of Medicinal Mushrooms, which contains many studies from Asia.

The reason for this is that certain countries—such as Japan—tend to do much better research in some areas of alternative medicine, because there's a much wider acceptance of these kinds of treatments in those parts of the world.

It's important to remember that in some areas of alternative medicine research, the U.S. is behind other countries. For instance, some of the best research into the medical properties of shiitake mushrooms comes out of Japan.

In the U.S., funding for mainstream cancer treatments such as chemotherapy and radiation have far surpassed funding for alternatives, and this has gone on for many decades.

That's why non-U.S. or international journals can be a mine of information. Even better, this information is often brand new—and therefore more intriguing—for western readers.

Fast-trackTip #2—Skim-read the abstract for...

type of study (human, animal or in vitro)

quality of study (well or poorly controlled)

length of study and number of participants

author affiliations

study conclusions

A great time-saver is to scan the abstract of an article, before reading the whole text. When you scan, you're looking to answer 5 essential questions.

Was it a human, animal or in vitro study? Human studies are more convincing—because they show the treatment or ingredient works on humans. You can still use animal studies—but the results should be compelling, and your copy should reveal the type of study. In rare cases an in vitro study (literally “in the petri dish”) can be used, but I would usually describe it as an “emerging” study. For example: “Emerging new evidence suggests ingredient X could be the next big thing when it comes to building bones of steel...”

Results obtained in animal and in vitro studies can sometimes be very compelling—particularly where they are considered to be acceptable substitutes for human research, or where human research is not possible.

However, when you're marketing supplements, there's a major caveat. When making claims about supplements as a whole, or their individual ingredients, the FDA and the FTC don't accept animal or in vitro studies as substantiation for claims.

Why? Because they don't prove the results would happen in humans. At best, they can be used as supportive evidence.

Overall—whether you're marketing a supplement or a newsletter—it's important to have a good balance of human studies throughout your promotion.

Was it a well-controlled study?

Many prospects will know that a randomized double-blind placebo control study is the 'gold standard' for clinical studies. Those who don't will be grateful if you tell them. And they'll trust your claims that much more. Readers will also feel smarter, and more engaged—because most readers like to be taught something new.

So what is a randomized double blind placebo control study? It's a study where:

Half the patients are given the real treatment and half are given a placebo (for example, a sugar pill which has no healing effects)...

The real treatment is given randomly—to stop the influence of unknown variables...

The patients in the study are 'blind'—in other words they don't know if they're getting the real treatment or the placebo...

It's blinded twice—double-blinded—because not only do the patients not know, but the researchers also don't know who is getting the real treatment and who is not...

If I'm using a well-controlled study, I'll mention this in my copy. I'll say something like: “And this was a double-blind placebo-controlled study—the gold standard of medical research...”

But if it wasn't, don't worry. If the results of the study were compelling, you can still use them to help support the claims you're making about the product.

What was the percentage reduction in symptoms of the disease...or the percentage increase in benefits of the treatment?

When you scan the abstract of a study, you're looking for sentences which contain a number, for example: “Metastatic lung tumor markers were reduced by 82%...” You're also looking for the word “significant”. In scientific studies, this word means that the effects seen were meaningful.

Usually, the higher the number, the better—but in some cases, where a disease is known to be incurable, or particularly stubborn, even a smaller number can suggest strong benefits for your reader. Especially if you compare it with other ingredients which have an even lower success rate in treating the symptoms of a disease.

How many subjects were in the study, and how long did it last?

A bigger, longer study is more reliable than a smaller, shorter one. A heart study on 11,793 patients is much more reliable than a study on 243 patients. You can use these big numbers to bolster credibility for your product, or—if you're selling a supplement—a particular ingredient.

One of the longest and best-known studies in the United States—the Framington Heart Study—recruited 5,209 men and women, and has tracked

health patterns related to cardiovascular disease over several decades. The study began in 1948 and is still running. The length of the study also makes it more reliable, so it's worth mentioning this time-frame in your copy.

Who were the authors, and where are they affiliated?

Clicking on the authors' names at the top of a study can be revealing. Which universities are they affiliated with? If Harvard, you can call them 'Harvard researchers'. Have they won prizes? Maybe even a Nobel Prize? A study which involves a well-known researcher—for example a Nobel-prizewinner—is going to be much more persuasive. If so you can call it a study by a 'Nobel Prize-winning scientist'. You could even make it a part of your headline. These are all ways to strengthen the credibility of your copy, and win over the most skeptical readers.

If the study was conducted by a renowned institution—such as Harvard Medical School—this can also be mentioned. Let's face it, a study from Harvard or Stanford is going to seem more credible than a study from the University of Nowhere-ville. Writing “A Harvard study found...” or “Harvard scientists uncovered...” will strengthen the power of your claim. It's also important to check how many institutions were involved in the study. A multi-center study—where different institutions are working together—can sometimes be used to boost credibility. A way of expressing this might be: “These findings were confirmed by eight research centers across the United States...”

What were the overall findings of the study?

The findings are usually in the last sentence or two of the abstract. They normally begin with “In conclusion...” If the compound under study “significantly” reduced symptoms, then this is a study you can cite. However, remember that in medical terms, “significant” doesn't mean “a lot”. It simply means that a measurable improvement was observed. The strength of the benefit is revealed in the numbers—how much the symptoms under study were reduced.

Skim-reading the abstract helps you establish whether the study is useful for your promotion. If it is, then you can go ahead and find more details in the study itself.

When was the study conducted?

Newer studies, for obvious reasons, are often better than older ones—as long as their findings are strong, of course. We are more likely to believe a research claim from 2015 than from 2001. It isn't necessary, in health copy, to give the date of a study—but if it's very recent, you can use this to boost credibility. You might even be able to claim that your product is supported by “new” science. You may even be able to claim that it's a “new discovery”. These kinds of claims build credibility as well as intrigue.

You may even be able to make a claim like this: “This research is so new, it's never been published outside academia—until today...” At the very least you can say: “A Harvard study just last month found...”

Fast-track Tip #3—Include the word 'review' in your search term...

A quick way to get an overview of relevant research is to include the word 'review' in your search term. By typing in 'flaxseed and cancer review', you'll get a list of secondary research articles which review a range of studies about the effects of flaxseed on cancer. This is a quick way to get to grips with the current state of research in the field, and to compare findings across different studies. It saves having to trawl through multiple abstracts across multiple studies—and instead gives you only the most relevant information (the key findings) in summary form.

Fast-track Tip #4—Search Google for news reports about the study...

This may be the most important tip of all! Major studies are often reported in the mainstream press. News reports of a major research finding usually describe the results in layman's terms, explain the wider significance of the findings (what this means for you...) and may even quote the chief researcher....

This is “golden” information you won't get from the study itself—which has to remain objective and scientific. I've often found great ways to explain a complex scientific finding, as well as powerful quotes, in a news report. Sometimes I've been able to use these quotes high up in the copy, including the headline.

But remember—it's always important to go back to the original study, and check that your claims are scientifically justified...

For one prostate supplement, I was able to quote an Oxford University biochemist, who claimed that most other prostate supplements didn't work

—because they were missing a specific ingredient which my product contained. I put the quote just under the headline, and it was the perfect 'instant-credibility' device to differentiate the product and win over the prospect.

2. Use Human Interest Stories from Case Studies & Medical Records

What's a case study, and where can I find them? When can I use patients' medical records? When should I not use them?

Case studies and medical records bring more of a personal feel to your evidence. When you can use a name, an age, and a location (“At 62, John Brown, from Dallas, was having heart murmurs...”), your reader is immediately hooked by the human element.

Again, it's about the power of stories. Once you have a character and the beginning of a compelling plot (a health crisis, for example), then you've got the reader hooked.

Case studies may not have all these personal details. Often they're likely to have the patient's age and gender, but no name. Case studies can be found through Google Scholar, or at specific medical websites, like the ones I've listed below.

Medical records, on the other hand, have all the details—but you'll have to do some digging. You can only use medical records which are already in the public domain, and that's rare—but not impossible. I'll give you an example...

When I was researching an alternative cancer therapy, I discovered that the researcher—Dr Stanislaw Burzynski—had been brought before a Grand Jury by the FDA five times, in an attempt to disprove the efficacy of his treatment (Burzynski won every single case).

Much of the testimony at these proceedings included patient medical records. I found the records online, at a site which was set up to disprove the claims made against Burzynski's treatment.

This meant that I was able to use the full names of the patients, and quote from their medical records. These cases generated so much evidence, in fact, that I was able to quote the patients themselves, and in some cases their primary care doctors (who had witnessed the health benefits of Burzynski's treatments).

It was a gold-mine of information, and along with those five Grand Juries, it gave me the “big idea” that led to a winning headline and lead.

3. Real-life Healing Stories

In Chapter 3 we discussed how stories can help create intimacy and drive the reader forward into the copy. One type of story that's central to a health promotion is a real-life healing story. But with real-life healing stories you're not only creating a fascinating read—you're also providing a picture of the health and lifestyle benefits, and offering proof of the efficacy of the product.

Real-life stories are distinct from case studies and medical records, because they're written or spoken by the patients themselves. I've put them in a separate category because they are not part of any medical literature, but instead can be found on health forums, or as testimonials found on the websites of organizations researching a particular treatment or ingredient.

Health forums are a gold-mine of human interest stories. They're visceral, but more important, they're written from the point of view of a patient—in other words, from the perspective of people just like your prospect. You'll often find these patients describing symptoms in ways only patients can—because they are actually experiencing them. And it's often more powerful to describe symptoms in their way than in a doctor's language—because it's much closer to what your prospect is seeing and feeling.

This can be incredibly powerful, and more than once has led, in my experience, to a powerful headline. At the very least, health forums help you get inside the head of your prospect, to understand their physical pains, emotions and frustrations, and to be able to describe their pain-points in colloquial language, using words and similes they can relate to.

Let's look at an example. Here's a description—from a health forum at www.patient.info—of the side-effects of atorvastatin, a pharmaceutical drug used to reduce cholesterol:

“I am on 40 mg of atorvastatin and my joints are so sore. It used to be in my muscles for nine months but the last three months my knees and fingers have been really hurting. I am in my 60s and play tennis but that and the stairs are becoming a problem...” Glynnis, UK

This post gives you some "gold-nugget" information to help position a natural cholesterol solution against the mainstream drug. Here you have the woman's name, age and location, as well as a very personal description of the physical side-effects and the negative changes the drug has imposed on her lifestyle. These are problems a cholesterol-challenged prospect might also be facing.

However, there is one caveat about using forums. Many people posting on forums have strong opinions about what works and what doesn't—the problem is, they're not researchers or doctors. Let them keep those opinions to themselves. It's usually best to use only the information that relates to their own experience, whether it's a set of symptoms or a treatment that worked for them. And it goes without saying—but I'll repeat it, because it's so important—you must also support their claims with evidence from scientific studies.

4. Mine Product Testimonials for Compelling Quotes

In Chapter 1, we discussed the importance of asking your client for product testimonials—whether it's for a supplement, a pain cream, a newsletter subscription, or any other health-related product.

You first need to check with your client that the testimonials have been legally approved. Then you need to look for specifics.

The testimonials you're looking for should:

support your claims about the product

paint a picture of the lifestyle benefits of the product

sound positive and upbeat

contain specific details

provide the customer's age and location

describe an emotional response

Here's an example of a good testimonial :

"I was amazed to receive complete relief within minutes".

- Jonathan K., Arizona, U.S.A.

It's an almost perfect testimonial because it includes the health benefit (“complete relief”), a specific time (“within minutes”) and an emotional response (“amazed”). The fact that all this information came in a very short sentence made it even better as support for a headline. If I'd had the man's age, this testimonial would have fulfilled every requirement, but at least I had a specific location.

Testimonials should never be edited. Not only is it legally dubious...but an edited testimonial—one that seems too 'tidied up'—feels false to the reader. A testimonial with grammatical errors...or that's a little rambling...feels authentic and real.

5. Spotlight the Product “Guru”

Whether you're marketing a supplement or a newsletter subscription, your product will have a product “guru”—the key person in the organization who was the “brains” behind the product. You may even be writing your promotion in this person's voice. So a key credibility booster is to spotlight the credentials, experiences and health attitudes of this individual.

You can do this in 3 ways:

Highlight their qualifications. If your “guru” is a Stanford PhD, a qualified nutritionist, or a medical expert with any number of qualifications at the end of their name, use these in the copy. A side-bar presenting his or her credentials is a powerful way to do this.

Describe their health transformations. Product “gurus” have often developed their products to solve a personal health issue. This is a perfect opportunity to describe the life-transformation they experienced—the ‘before’ and ‘after’—including both the health and the lifestyle benefits. Were they on the verge of losing their job, their marriage and their kids because of depression, but were saved by a unique combination of herbal compounds, leading to a complete life turnaround? In a case like this, you can describe the transformation and emphasize the key motivation for getting the product “out there”—which is often to help other people just like them. This brings empathy and intimacy to your copy, as well as added credibility . And if you’re writing in the voice of the product “guru”—this instantly enhances the credibility of your copy.

Explain their attitudes and beliefs. Product “gurus” often have strongly held beliefs about a particular health treatment, or a particular approach to medicine, which are part of their identity and central to the USP of their product. Publishers who are selling alternative health newsletters may believe, very strongly, that mainstream medicine is a real problem when it comes to getting the truth about natural health treatments that work. They may believe that in different ways, the average prospect is either being lied to, or that the information is being suppressed.

Once you've identified these beliefs, it's worth bringing them into your copy—because the chances are, the list you're selling to may have been chosen because they share these beliefs. Of course, that's all part of identifying the demographics of your prospect at the start of the copywriting process. But you can emphasize this by telling a story about how your product “guru” came to this belief. Perhaps they watched a parent go through a mainstream medical treatment, only to get worse— and then get significantly better after trying a natural treatment doctors told them was useless.

6. Exploit the Power of Celebrity

Gwyneth Paltrow...Megan Fox...Elle McPherson...Arnold Schwarzenegger...At one time, each of these celebrities has been on the record, talking up a specific ingredient—one of which, if you're lucky, might just be in the product you're promoting.

It's a powerful connection for readers. Your prospects will see people like these as youthful for their age, fully of vitality and energy, and with great skin. But more than that, they're successful—and while you must focus on the health benefits of your product, and how these celebrities have benefited, the association with success, beauty, and a charmed life will not be lost on your reader.

There are different ways to use the celebrity association. Celebrities— and their lifestyles—can often seem unattainable to people like you and me. So a powerful take on the celebrity angle is to position the ingredient or product by explaining that it used to be out of your grasp—but now the average person can also have access.

For example: “It's no longer for the elite, the top 1%. Now every day folk like you and me are seeing incredible results with this youth compound / herb / formula...”

But we're not only talking about pop culture celebrities. The power of big names can also be used with Nobel-winning scientists, PhDs, or even chief

researchers from big-name colleges and universities. Quotes from these can give instant credibility, including in your headline.

How to Present the Evidence—

so that your prospect is persuaded and intrigued...

Let's imagine, by now, you've read dozens of studies, testimonials, healing-stories, and quotes from celebrities or top scientists. The next step is put this into your copy. You'll know by now that most of your scientific information is fairly dry, and may even be quite complex. So the challenge is to make it simple, powerful and meaningful for your reader.

There are many ways to present evidence. Below are my “6 Top Evidence Tips” for making your evidence simple, powerful and meaningful for your prospect:

The incredible power of bullet-points...

Making the evidence real for your reader...

Using plain, every-day English...

The power of great similes...

Statistical tricks and tips...

Re-naming—or “ghosting”—treatments and reports...

1. The Incredible Power of Bullets...

No, not the shooting kind. In a long promotion, the use of bullet-points can be a powerful tool for presenting vital information in a way that is accessible to the skim-reader, as well as the serious buyers who read every single word. But I'm not talking about simple bullet-point lists here. In a winning promotion, bullets need to contain four elements to make them stand out:

they should contain a core benefit

they should be supported with scientific evidence

they should be specific

they should be unique

Let's look at the following bullet list, and see what it contains:

...

In this report we reveal stunning youth-restoring treatments that are safe and proven by research, including...

The incredible energy-boosting weapon trusted by marathon runners. This powerful youth-serum was first used by British long-distance

runners to treat exhaustion. It literally re-grows your body's natural source of energy—the vital mitochondria that die off as you age. An Oxford University study found it boosted energy by more than 43% in just 14 weeks...(revealed on page 24)

The youth elixir that visibly reduces wrinkles in just three weeks. It comes from a Bulgarian plum that's so rare, there are only 5 trees left in the entire world. It's packed with super-nutrients that protect against radiation and slow skin-aging. Combined with a Japanese algae super-nutrient, it can reduce wrinkle depth by a full 15% in less than a month....(it's all revealed on page 27)

...

In each of these bullets, I've written the core benefit in bold. I give further details of those benefits deeper into the bullet (“boosted energy”, “protect against radiation”). Notice how each benefit includes a time-factor—a promise that the benefits will come in a very short period of time (“14 weeks”, “less than a month”).

I've included 'exotic' information to intrigue the reader (“used by British long-distance runners”, “only five trees left in the entire world”). This fulfills the important copywriting goal of making the reader feel they are benefiting as they read, by learning something interesting and new—something they can impress friends and colleagues with. It also ensures that the claims are unique.

I've also made sure to include specific scientific results (“43% in just 14 weeks”, “reduce wrinkle depth by a full 15%”).

2. How to Make the Science Real for Your Reader...

There are different ways to present scientific evidence, and some work better than others. Your main goal is make to take the dry-ness out of the science and make it real—and there are some powerful tricks that can help you do this...

Take a look at the way I've presented a heart disease study, below. Notice how I've included the key numbers, but I've also added “storytelling” elements—so that the presentation of the science isn't dry, but has a human, emotional element:

...

Russian scientists were amazed when they compared a compound from a deep-sea algae with the widely-used cholesterol drug, Simvastatin...

They gave this all-natural compound to patients with a high risk of coronary disease...compared it with Simvastatin...and the results were staggering...

Patients who took Simvastatin saw their LDL cholesterol levels fall by only 16.4%, and their total cholesterol by 12.2%.

But patients who took the deep-sea extract beat the statin numbers by a full 19.1% in LDL levels and 15.1% in total cholesterol levels.

This natural deep-sea extract blew the statin right out of the water... and there was no risk of cancer...

...

Describing the emotional response of scientists and doctors can be powerful—because if the researcher is “stunned”, then clearly we should be too. Notice how I've explained the aim of this study in clear, layperson's English. And notice how—after the scientific numbers—I spell out the meaning of this result in very colloquial language (“blew the statin right out of the water...”).

Numbers are powerful—but you need to make sure that the full meaning of a scientific result is absolutely clear. If you need to use phrases like “This means”, or “What this shows you is...”, then go right ahead. And inserting phrases like “the results were staggering” isn't just sales-jargon. It's intended to make sure that the benefits are well-understood, especially when they're surrounded by statistics.

Often, including the name of the scientific journal can boost the impact of your claim. Here's an example:

...

Breakthrough studies show this miracle protein... can selectively destroy damaged cells and prevent cancer...

In a study in the journal Biochemistry and Cell Biology, it stopped deadly toxins from causing cancer of the colon, esophagus, lung and bladder ...

In a Journal of Clinical Oncology study, it increased the overall survival of late-stage lung cancer patients by 65 %...

And in a Journal of Dairy Science study, it decreased the growth of breast cancer cells by 63.9%...

Imagine. Billions of dollars wasted on deadly treatments like chemo and radiation...and yet a natural solution...with no side-effects...is right there

...

Notice how immediately after the bullets, I bring my copy right back to the key selling point of this particular product—it's comparative efficacy and safety compared to mainstream treatments like chemotherapy and radiation.

Notice how I also use colloquial language (“Imagine...”) to bring the reader back down to earth, after all those statistics.

3. How to Write Scientific Claims in Plain Everyday English...

Let's take a look at a scientific explanation of how the prostate gland works:

“The prostatic fluid is expelled in the first ejaculate fractions, together with most of the spermatozoa. In comparison with the few spermatozoa expelled together with mainly seminal vesicular fluid, those expelled in prostatic fluid have better motility, longer survival and better protection of the genetic material.”

When you do your research, you'll read sentences like this all the time. But you'd never include this kind of copy in your promotion. First, you'll need to figure out what it means. And then you'll need make it easy and exciting for your reader. Here's how I turned this into plain English:

...

Your prostate is a walnut-sized gland right behind your pubic bone. And one of its most important jobs is to filter and flush out toxins, so your sperm can stay super-healthy...

Think of it like an oil filter in a 1959 Lincoln Continental. It's job is to remove the gunk from engine oil—so the oil stays pure, and that beautiful car can run like a dream...

It's the same with your prostate. Problem is, night and day...24/7...your prostate's working overtime, battling a tidal wave of toxins...

...

Notice how, in the scientific explanation, there's a whole bunch of scientific information the prospect simply doesn't need to know. In my rewrite, I've picked out only the details that link to one of the major benefits of my product, which is that by protecting your prostate you also protect your virility...

4. The Power of a Great Simile

There's nothing more powerful than a great simile when it comes to putting a medical condition or solution into plain English, or when describing the function and mechanism of an organ or body part.

Let me give you an example. The endothelium—the inner lining of the arteries—is 62,000 miles long. When writing about the importance of this organ in relation to heart disease (the endothelium can be easily damaged, leading to a build-up of plaque), it was important to emphasize just how major a body-part the endothelium is. So I used a simile, one that (hopefully) most readers could immediately grasp:

“Stretched flat, this organ would run for 62,000 miles—that's like driving from New York to L.A. and back again, eleven times...!”

Or when driving home the potency of a compound which “flushes toxins” out of the liver:

“Think of your liver as the engine of '52 Buick. With a Buick, as long as you change the oil every few months, your engine can run forever. It's the same with your liver...”

You can even extend the simile, playing out all the negative scenarios that could happen if you don't take this toxin-flushing compound:

“And just like your liver, if you don't change the oil on your Buick three or four times a year, it'll clog up and die—and your shiny Buick will be ready for the junkyard. Do you really want to same thing to happen to your liver...not to mention your life?”

Putting anatomical and biological information in down-to-earth terms makes them instantly accessible to non-scientist readers.

5. Statistical Tricks and Tips...

Some ways of presenting numbers and statistics are more persuasive than others. As with all copy, however, the only way to find out what works

better is to test it again and again.

That said, it's worth thinking about the different ways you can present numbers:

Specific numbers are more persuasive than rounded-out numbers. Example: “2,482 patients survived” is stronger than “almost 2,500 patients survived”. To me, there's something more personal about a specific number. It suggests we're talking about real people, and that the extra ones and tens are important, and are not just a statistic. Specific numbers are also more realistic, and therefore more trustworthy. And the more trustworthy your copy, the more persuasive it is.

Often a fraction sounds stronger than a percentage. Example: “One fifth” sounds stronger than “20%”.

If the actual number is relatively small, then a percentage usually sounds stronger than the number. Example: “60% of patients survived” clearly sounds stronger than “6 out of 10 patients survived”. This might sound like a numerical “fudge”—but prospects with health issues are often looking for a percentage in order to quickly and easily understand their chances of a cure.

Graphs with sharp curves are more persuasive than flat-curve graphs. This is an obvious point, but very important. The way a graph is presented visually can make or break the believability of a health claim. This is more of a graphics tip—but as a copywriter, it's good to be on the lookout for good graphics which support your overall concept, sales strategy or One Big Idea.

6. Invent 'Ghost' Titles for Reports, Studies and Treatments...

A powerful tool for emphasizing the strength and uniqueness of a study, report or treatment is to give it a new, and more powerful, name. This emphasizes its new-ness (the name has never been heard before) and makes it more intriguing...

Let me give you an example. In California there's a state list of blacklisted chemicals—substances which are known to be carcinogenic. It's called Proposition 65.

Let's face it—that's not a very compelling title. It's also a fairly well-known document, especially in California. But I wanted to use it to prove that many of these carcinogens are still getting into our bodies—through the water supply, through the packaged foods we eat, even in the medicinal drugs we're given.

So I decided to re-package it. Within this list were 90 deadly drugs that doctors, hospitals and Big Pharma sell to patients, knowing they cause cancer. So I extracted these 90 drugs, made a new list, and called it 'DeathChem 90'.

Another example of re-packaging—or 'ghosting'—comes from a series of treatments offered in a premium. During the research phase, I discovered that many of the natural ingredients in these treatments are eaten on a daily basis by Okinawan islanders—who are among the longest-living people in the world.

However, Okinawa is one of the well-known Blue Zones—places in the world with the highest percentage of centenarians. The Okinawa-angle is used often in health promotions, and I wanted something more original. Another name for Okinawa is the Ryuku Islands—and that gave me the name I needed for this group of ingredients. I called them 'The Ryuku Cancer Secrets'.

The Power of the “Big Tease”—

how to make your prospect read right to the end...

In direct mail marketing, the envelope 'teaser' is the copy on the envelope which suggests or promises a stunning revelation or benefit— but only if you open the envelope, and read the letter...

Teasing the reader is a vital element in any sales copy, whether it's a landing page, a digital sales letter, a video sales letter or any other kind of promotion.

Your headline is one big tease. Your eyebrow, which should lead in to the main copy, teases the reader with suggestions about the incredible revelations which lie ahead.

When you're selling subscriptions to a newsletter, using health reports as premiums, you'll spend almost your entire copy teasing the contents of those premiums without giving too much away.

After all, your end goal is not to reveal everything—right up to the last minute. Remember, the prospect will get everything only after he takes out his credit card and makes the payment. Your end goal is to get your reader so excited, so motivated to change his lifestyle, so geared up about the promised benefits he'll experience after buying the product...that he'll take out his credit card right now and buy.

There's a well-known technique in sales called the “velvet glove” strategy. You've probably heard of it, but it's worth remembering here. Imagine a door-to-door salesman, selling pots and pans to housewives. He carries these pots in a velvet pouch. While he's selling these pots—in fact, the whole time he's giving his sales pitch—he doesn't once take them out of the pouch.

Instead, as he talks up their benefits, and the ways they'll change the prospect's life, he rubs the pouch lovingly. He touches it lightly, respectfully. Only at the very end of his sales pitch does he take the pots out of the pouch.

By the time the pots are finally revealed, even before they're revealed, the prospect has already been persuaded.

How so? It's the power of the “Big Tease”. The key is to fill the prospect's imagination with the ways his life will be transformed, once he has the product in his hands. If you can build up your product in the prospect's mind before you reveal the product itself, then the prospect will form an emotional attachment to the product. That's why being aware of the prospect's core buying emotion, which we covered in Chapter 2, is so important.

The key to this technique is to remember that it's not the pots themselves that are doing the selling. It's the salesperson's language, and the prospect's imagination.

Language and imagination—probably the two most important tools in any kind of selling.

As a copywriter, you can think of it this way. What's the number 1 goal of each line in your copy? The number 1 goal of each line in your copy...is to get the reader to the next line. If you can do that by teasing the reader—line to line, paragraph to paragraph, section to section...then eventually you'll have got him right to the end of the copy...and you'll be selling more product than you can imagine.

So how do we tease the reader in a health promotion? The “Big Tease” strategy can be used in three ways:

Hold back a secret...

Promise a revelation...

Build expectation by omission...

Hold Back a Secret...

No-one likes to be the only one who doesn't know the “big secret”. Remember that best-selling book, 'The Secret'? The title itself was probably its best marketing strategy. Offering to share a powerful secret is a sure way to intrigue the prospect, and to trigger their desire to become part of an 'inner circle' of people who are “in the know”. Think of it like being the only person left at home on a Saturday night—while every one else is out partying with friends. Do you really want to be that person—left out, left behind, disadvantaged? Of course, the party might be terrible, and if you went, you might even regret it. But that's not the point. The most persuasive factor here is what you don't know—not what you know, or think, or assume.

Core benefits can become powerful secrets (to be revealed deeper in the copy, or in a premium). In a promotion with an anti-establishment headline, the crimes or mistakes of authority can become the “big secret” to be revealed later in the copy.

Hidden reports, secret treatments, underground cures, long lost healing techniques...are all examples of compelling secrets.

If you can make your prospect hungry to know a secret, then you've motivated them to read deeper into your copy. Remember: your number 1 goal is to get that sale!

Another way of looking at secrets is to see them as essential elements of good story-telling. Does a good author give away everything at the beginning? Never! She makes you read about the trials and tribulations of her characters first! She teases you with suggestions about how good or bad the secret is, or how it might change the characters' lives.

That's why good mysteries and crime novels are called "page-turners". We need to turn our own health promotions into "page-turners".

Promise a Revelation...

Often the headline "eyebrow" offers the promise of revelations deeper in the copy. Words like "INSIDE:..." or "Revealed:..." can be used to announce them. Here's an example:

"INSIDE: The secret "deep ocean" cancer protocol that could make you immune from cancers of the liver, lung, prostate and breast...and why the U.S. government kept it hidden, two miles underground, for 45 years... "

In the body of the promotion, the promise of revelations will often come in bullets, where each bullet highlights a core benefit from an as yet unnamed treatment or ingredient. Here's an example that teases the contents of a premium:

...

If you're worried about your weakening bones, high cholesterol or aching joints...

...this report will give you fast and easy strategies...based on hard science... to beat back the disease of aging. In this report, you'll...

Learn how to sleep like a baby without swallowing dangerous pills. We'll reveal how you can get at least 8 hours of refreshing, restorative sleep every night. And how to get your hands on an essential nutrient that helps every cell in your body get young again—even while you sleep...

Know the hidden cause of 70% of all diseases... This simple lifestyle mistake can steal away decades of happy, healthy living. We'll show you the quick trick that can help you reverse this fatal error....plus five super-nutrients that can combat the aging of your liver, bladder and heart...

You'll discover all-natural, protective measures, including...

A simple blood test to check your body for a lethal toxin found in soaps, washing liquids and other cleaning products...

Why low levels of an essential steroid place you at higher risk of chronic inflammation and cancer...

And how to reverse the food deficiency that causes high levels of stress and plays a role in 80% of diseases...

...

Build Expectation by Omission...

Often a “tease” works by leaving out critical information. The example below works by leaving out the product itself—while telling the prospect almost everything about the benefits, and how her life can be transformed:

...

In studies on patients with arthritis, a compound containing this extract reduced inflammation by as much as 400%.

And a study in the International Journal of Arthritis showed arthritis patients who took a compound extracted from this rare plant had 80% greater mobility, compared to 22% in a control group..

Even Nobel prize-winning researcher Alfred Seznoski agrees: the research shows this extract has “unbelievably potent” anti-inflammatory effects.

So where can you find this proven arthritis treatment?

With these incredible results, you'd expect this compound to be flying off the shelves of your local health food store, right?

Wrong.

This is the second most widely prescribed anti-arthritis drug in the world. It's completely natural, with no side-effects. It's been approved by health authorities around the world. Including Taiwan's Health Ministry since 1962.

And yet...here, in America, doctors are prescribing a much more expensive drug which causes severe side-effects and has almost NO impact on inflammation. Which means millions of arthritis patients are being denied a treatment that could completely transform their lives.

That's why I'm contacting you today.

...

In this example, notice how the name of the product is omitted, but is still referred to in ways that aim to intrigue the reader: “this rare plant”, “this proven arthritis treatment”. Notice how the reader is teased with a question: “So where can you find this proven arthritis treatment?”—but the answer to the question is held back. Instead, the copy continues to build up the widespread popularity of the treatment, which will make the prospect wonder why on earth it's so hard to get hold of.

Finally, “That's why I'm contacting you today” effectively announces (or suggests) that the product will be revealed. But again—it won't happen just yet...

A quick side-note: In this example, notice how the copy builds up the efficacy and popularity of this anti-arthritis treatment—everywhere in the world except the United States. This is a useful strategy in health copywriting, because many countries in the world have a better track record than the United States, when it comes to alternative (nonprescription drug) therapies.

It can be a shock for prospects to realize that the U.S. is so far behind other countries, when it comes to alternative and natural health treatments. And if a Nobel prize-winning researcher agrees—there must be some truth in it!

Suddenly, your prospect feels like an outsider—because her own government has denied her important health secrets other countries have total access to.

In other words, you've created in her a desire to know the secret.

Excellent work!

**You're now well on your way to becoming a
top-earning health copywriter!**

In this chapter you've learned...

How to build a persuasive scientific argument to prove your benefit claims...

How to source and use case histories, clinical trials and research studies...

My 6 top health credibility hacks...

How to identify the most reliable studies...

What to look for in a study—and where to find it...

How to present the evidence—so that your prospect is persuaded and intrigued...

The power of the “Big Tease”, and how to use it...

In the next chapter you'll learn...

How to speed-write your sales pitch...

The 4 Sales Journeys (Belief, Solution, Heart and the One Big Idea)...

How to structure a sales letter...

How to make a Don Corleone offer—one that’s “impossible to refuse”...

The art of the false close...

How to rationalize a prospect’s buying decision...

How to build urgency into your Call to Action...

The art of the P.S...

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Chapter 5

Putting it All Together - the Prospect's Journey from Headline to Sale

You're nearly there! You've completed your research, you have a ton of notes, you've got some big ideas up your sleeve—and now you're ready to test it all out by actually writing your promotion...

But how do you put it all together? How do you begin the writing process? And—more importantly—how do you structure your promotion to optimize the persuasive power of your message?

Structuring and writing your promotion can be a challenge—especially when you have a ton of research, including studies, patient stories, nuggets about ingredients, credentials of the product “guru”... all jostling for a place in your copy.

So let's break it all down. Here's the process I follow. Some parts of this process and structure are essential. Others are simply what works best for me...

Analyze the control (and any other great promotions) for structure...

Speed write your sales pitch (off-the-cuff, without editing)...

Mind-map your sales journey (what steps will you lead your prospect through?)...

Write your first draft ...

Karate chop your first draft...

Re-write, re-write, re-write...

Let's work through these steps one by one...

Step 1—Analyze the Control for Structure...

In Chapter 1 we talked about the importance of analyzing the current control. At this point, as you start to plan the structure of your promotion, it's a good idea to go back to the control, and look at the way information is ordered on the page. What seems to work for you? What has emotional impact? At what points in the promotion do you start to lose interest? And why?

For example, do some sections contain too much scientific evidence? Or too many numbers? Is there enough proof at the top of the copy to persuade prospects to read further? Are the human-interest stories (patient success stories, for example) too long? Too short? Could you get more emotional impact out of them with a sentence or two, instead of three paragraphs? And so on...

You should also spend time analyzing other great promotions which sell similar products. This helps you see what might work with your specific sales pitch. I'll give you an example...

Let's imagine you're selling a supplement which protects against bone loss, poor eyesight and high blood sugar... all at the same time. You've decided to promote the product as an “everything-in-one-little-pill” type of supplement. That's a great idea—but how will you structure the opening paragraphs of your lead, so that ALL these benefits are immediately (or very quickly) visible?

Analyzing other great promotions is great way to work out some of these structural challenges.

On the other hand, if the control happens to be really bad...then you should be able to spot what's wrong with the structure immediately...and make your own copy a whole lot better...

Step 2—Speed-write Your Sales Pitch...

There's something I do, every time I write a promotion, that really helps me separate what's important, intriguing and emotionally engaging...from what's less significant, boring and emotionally dull. It works for me—and it might work for you too.

As a very first draft—before I've even formulated a sales strategy—I sit down at the computer, I imagine I'm talking to the ideal prospect (in a bar, or by a warm fire, or even at the beach), and I write.

I write without thinking much about structure. I write without stopping. I try to express my enthusiasm for the product. What makes it so great. Why people like “you” (the ideal prospect) need it. How the product's various parts “fit” together. I might bring in some of the amazing connections with history, or a celebrity, or the adventures of a scientist in the jungles of Borneo... Whatever feels good...

I just see what comes out. I do this for 30 minutes. Then I take a break. Then I write for another 30 minutes. Then another break. And so on, until I've written five or six pages.

And usually—if I'm lucky—I can see a sales strategy starting to form. I notice big ideas that seem to be jostling for a place in the copy. I find myself using turns of phrases—similes or strong words—I hadn't thought of before.

The importance of this process is that it's emotional. It takes you—the copywriter—back to the core emotional compulsions that will trigger a sale.

And that's because, for this step of the writing process, I didn't really think—I just wrote. Of course, I had stacks of research in the back of my head. But that research only came out if there was something emotional about it. Something the prospect could attach herself to in a personal, meaningful way.

This process helps me see what's going to be important...what works emotionally...and what doesn't work at all. Sometimes I'm surprised at what comes out. Ideas I thought would be good—during the research process—suddenly seem flat when I type them out. Others that were only dim thoughts...suddenly stand up and announce themselves, saying “Use me! I'm great!”.

And only then am I ready to start mind-mapping—in a more conscious, logical way...

Step 3—Mind-map Your Sales Journey...

A sales letter is usually structured in the following way:

Teasers & headline

The lead

The sales argument

The false close

The close

The Guarantee & P.S.

Before we get into the specifics of this structure, let's talk about what going on a sales journey actually means for your prospect...

Your promotion will take the prospect on a journey—a journey from almost complete ignorance of the product...through new knowledge and revelations...right up to the sale.

I like to think of that journey as being packed with adventure. It's full of promise. It involves some danger. There are some intriguing stories along the way. The prospect will learn things—gems of information, amazing revelations. She'll be transformed—and not just by the product, but by the promotion itself...

So it's helpful to think in some detail about the journey she'll be going on. In fact, there are 4 journeys which make up the big, overall sales journey. They're all interconnected. And they're all happening more or less at the same time...

Within the overall SALES journey—where you're taking your prospect from (possibly total) ignorance of your product...to a sale...there are 4 more interconnected journeys to be aware of:

The BELIEF journey: You're taking your prospect from skepticism or doubt to certainty.

The SOLUTION journey: You're taking your prospect from (varying degrees of) awareness of a health problem to a definite solution. Or for

less aware prospects—from total ignorance of a health issue to complete awareness of the solution.

The HEART journey: You're taking your prospect on an emotional journey. From fear to hope to hopes realized. Or from vanity and the need for recognition to a realization of those needs. Or from loneliness (because arthritis is keeping your prospect housebound) to a warm, fuzzy, friendly feeling (because your product will help stop the pain and swelling, so she can see her friends every day).

The ONE BIG IDEA journey: You're also telling your prospect a powerful story—the story behind your big idea, which runs through your copy as a connecting thread from start to finish.

Usually, I don't write a specific plan for each of these journeys. But I do plan for them. I keep them in mind as I write, to make sure each one is fulfilled by the copy. As I write, I ask myself questions like:

Am I building the prospect's belief in the product, step by step, in an incremental way? Or are there moments when the evidence less than convincing? Or where I'm asking her to believe too much?

Do I have the right balance of emotion and reason? Is there too much emotion? Or too much reason? And are they the right emotions, given my prospect's specific health concerns?

Have I answered every objection and potential question the prospect might have?

Have I explained the solution well enough, as the promotion progresses, so that the reader completely understands what it is, how it works, and the

science behind it?

Is my reader always aware of the One Big Idea—or do I need to emphasize it more, and in new ways, throughout?

In chapter 1 we also discussed two types of reader: the high-speed skim-reader, who will skim the surface of your promotion for the key benefits; and the “conscientious” reader who will read and digest every word before he takes out his credit card.

Having these journeys—and these two types of prospect—in your mind is helpful when you're bringing all your research together to build the body of your promotion. Think of it as a checklist to remind you of the different ways you're moving your prospect towards a sale.

So let's take a look at the structure of a sales letter:

i. Teasers & headline

As we discussed in Chapter 2, the headline and teasers give your prospect the big promise. They provide instant credibility. They tease a core benefit. They announce the One Big Idea. And they lead directly into the copy...

ii. The lead

As we discussed in Chapter 3, the lead copy “houses” the big idea. Its job is to hook the prospect emotionally into the product. It tells a story. It weaves your One Big Idea into the story. It starts to build credibility. And it paints a vivid, visceral picture of the benefits of your product...

iii. The sales argument

The sales argument is the body of your sales letter. It relies on a sales strategy—which we also discussed in Chapter 3. The sales argument makes claims about the product, and proves them. It restates the big promise. It continues to emphasize more, and different benefits. It presents your product's Unique Selling Proposition (USP). It introduces the product. And it provides testimonials.

And—finally—it states your offer...

I call this the Don Corleone Moment. Remember that famous line from *The Godfather*, “I'm gonna make him an offer...he can't refuse...”? That's exactly what we need to do here. We need to make the prospect an offer that's absolutely impossible to refuse. An offer your prospect would be remiss, even stupid, to turn down.

iv. The false close

The false close is used by all top copywriters—because they know it's one of the most effective ways to secure a sale, after the offer has been made.

It works like this. Imagine you're the prospect. You've read through the sales letter, all the way to the offer. You've read about dozens of promised benefits, and you've seen a mountain of proof. You have a clear picture in your mind of the lifestyle changes the product will bring you. You've read the offer—which is very hard to refuse—and you're pretty much convinced. In fact, you're ready to buy the product, and you're sure that's exactly what you're going to be asked to do...

Then, unexpectedly—instead of being asked to buy, you're told something even more incredible about the product. Or perhaps you're offered another amazing premium, at absolutely no cost to you...

What you've just experienced is called a false close. You've been driven right to the edge of the buying moment—but just as you're about to buy, you're given one more added benefit.

By adding a new benefit, something the reader never expected, you're making him feel he's getting even more than you promised. Especially if you've already made the offer, and have rationalized both the price and the decision to buy.

At this point, the prospect feels like he's heard everything there is to know about the product—so to hear something new, when he's already sold (or almost sold) will make him even more willing to buy.

Your false close could be as simple as this:

“So where can you get your hands on this incredible formula? Before I tell you that, let me show you one more benefit...”

v. The close

When you close your sales letter, you've already given your sales argument—but you haven't convinced every single reader. That's why there are essential components to closing copy, each of which are designed to erase the prospect's doubts, in different ways.

In your closing copy you'll restate the big promise. You'll equate the product with the desired core benefit. You'll summarize other key benefits in new ways. And you'll restate the Unique Selling Proposition (USP).

But that's not all a successful close does. To really clinch the deal, there are 5 essential “closing strategies” which will help erase every lingering doubt your prospect might have about taking out her credit card and spending money on your product:

Your close needs to:

Make the deal seem like a really good value

Rationalize the buying decision

Add an additional, unexpected benefit

Provide a guarantee

Give an URGENT Call to Action

Making the “Good Value” Argument

It can take a lot of persuasion to convince your reader that the benefits of the product are worth the cost—even if it might seem obvious to you.

That's why it's important to drive home the rationale behind the cost, and to explain as simply and directly as you can why the cost is such a good deal.

Here's an example of copy—coming towards the end of the sales letter, but before the guarantee—which states the cost rationale and emphasizes the great value of the deal:

...

To have full access to the top scientific journals, you'd have to pay thousands of dollars a year...even though the research is funded...by you, the tax-payer!

That's just not right. We'd never make you spend thousands of dollars...on lifesaving information...that's already rightfully yours...

With XYZ Health Magazine, we access the journals for you.

We scour every study, searching for the latest treatments...

...and break them down into simple, easy-to-read articles...packed with useful health information you can put into action the moment you read it...

Our research costs are quite high. If we circulated our magazine as a private report, it would probably sell for about \$600 a year. But we wanted to make it affordable to everyone.

Normally, XYZ Health Magazine costs just \$69 a year—that's just under \$6 a month. But today we're giving you an even better price...

During this special membership drive, we're almost giving away subscriptions at nearly 50% of that cost...

Today a 1 year subscription to XYZ Health Magazine costs just \$39.

That's 10 cents a day.

...

The 'good value' argument here is that the alternative—subscribing to every top scientific journal—is much more expensive.

The copy also ties this to an anti-establishment theme, the idea that we shouldn't be paying so much to sign up for medical journals, when those same journals are funded by our taxes!

Notice how the price drops twice, from very high (“thousands of dollars a year”) to extremely low (“10 cents a day”). This helps break down the reader's resistance in two steps, making the final offer impossible to refuse.

When the prospect reads, “That's 10 cents a day”, you want her to be thinking: “All that, for 10 cents a day? Are you kidding me? Where do I sign up?!”

So the buying decision is rationalized, here, by positioning the product as a cost-effective alternative to an expensive “wrong” committed by the medical establishment—which your tax dollars are already paying for.

Another way to rationalize the buying decision is to break down, simply and briefly, what your prospect will be getting for the price, as in this example:

...

For 10 cents a day, you'll get...

Practical strategies to help you live longer and healthier—supported by science...

Medically-proven stories of patients who survived some of the worst chronic diseases...

The hidden causes—and early warning signs—of every major disease...

Which supplements work, which don't, and why...

Natural remedies, treatments and cures for every important health issue...

...

Add an Additional, Unexpected Benefit

We've talked about the false close—immediately after the offer—where you've held back from the buying moment, to offer an additional benefit.

But this is different. This goes even further. You can provide one final benefit—just before the letter closes (and just before the P.S.)—to sweeten the deal.

By now, your prospect should be feeling grateful. You should have them in a position where they'd almost feel guilty if they didn't buy—because you've given them so much already.

vi. The Guarantee and the P.S.

Your guarantee should state the actual terms of the refund policy—and make it absolutely clear. The aim here is to alleviate any residual buying reservations .

Perhaps the most important thing about your guarantee is clarity. The prospect should know exactly what her rights are, when it comes to getting her money back. Ideally, the guarantee should confirm that when (not “if”) the prospect buys the product, they are doing so with absolutely no financial risk.

Here's an example of a strong guarantee:

—

Take ABC Formula TODAY 100% Risk-Free!

If for any reason you don't want to continue taking ABC Formula, just call us and let us know. You get an immediate refund—and you won't have to wait.

You see, my guarantee is easy...it's not time-consuming...and it'll cause you no stress at all...

You NEVER have to return the unused soft-gels, or even the empty bottles. That means you NEVER have to re-pack your purchase, or wait in line at the post office.

And there's NO time limit. You can ask for a refund any time you like. Months...or even years...after you buy.

Either way, I'll give you a full and immediate refund of every penny paid—and I won't ask you annoying questions.

What's more, I'll even pay you back for shipping!

That way, I take all the risk.

That may seem like a lot of words for a guarantee—but every single one of those words is important. Notice how the guarantee is repeated, in different ways. This is so that there can be absolutely no doubt in the reader's mind.

It sometimes helps to imagine your prospect is tired or distracted—so that you spell out the guarantee, re-phrasing it once or even twice, until there can be no question that it's fully understood. You have to convince your prospect that they have nothing to lose, when buying your product.

The Call to Action—and Why Urgency is Critical

As you close, it's vital that you spark immediate action. Not later today, or tomorrow, or even in a few moments—but right now.

Remember—a percentage of prospects will never open your promotion. Another percentage will open it, half-read it, and then move on. Yet another percentage will read it, then set it aside with the intention of buying later—but will usually forget, and never buy your product or even think about it, ever again...

Do you see what we're up against? This why a call to action—with a good dose of urgency—is such an important part of the close of your promotion.

For this reason, it's essential to grab your reader at exactly the right moment, shake their shoulders, and say: “Ok, so I've managed to convince you, now THIS is what you must do, to actually get your hands on the product, right now, before it's too late...”

You can do this in a number of ways—but these are the 4 strategies I use most often:

Offer your prospect a premium (or multiple premiums)...

Tell your reader that the product has limited availability...

Give your prospect a deadline...

Offer your reader a discount for a fast response...

Note that your client—the company you're writing your promotion for—may already have a call to action that has worked well with their list(s). Ask them. But if the product is new, or if you think the control isn't doing as well as it could, then use your instincts, as well as your (by now) deep knowledge of the prospect, to suggest something better.

Here's an example of the limited availability strategy. This is a supplement promotion which emphasizes urgency by limiting supplies of the product:

...

Only 300 Bottles Left

As I mentioned before, demand was so heavy that customers bought up most of my stock in just three months.

Which means I only have 300 bottles left, until a new shipment arrives. And that could take another three months!

Which is why you received this message today. And there's a reason it's even more important that you don't waste any time...

You see, I've sent this message to well over 150,000 people, just in the last 12 hours. That means less than 0.5% will get my remaining bottles...

So if you don't order now, I can't promise you that there'll be any bottles left tomorrow, or tonight, or even in a few hours...

So I urge you to act now, and claim the last few bottles of my current supply, while you still can...

...

In this example, the product shortage is explained by its immense popularity. This psychological device persuades the prospect that thousands of others have already bought the product, that they could be part of an elite group if they also buy, and that they shouldn't waste any time. The use of percentages (“...less than 1% will get my remaining bottles...”) helps to drive home the message.

The 'P.S.' and the Eager Reader...

In Chapter 2 we talked about skim-readers and “conscientious” readers. But there's a third kind of reader, the kind I call the Eager Reader. The Eager Reader skips right to the end of the promo without reading anything in between...

They're the kind of reader who wants to know everything up front—the kind who skips to the last page of a novel just to see how it ends. They may be looking for a signature, to check who wrote the letter, and see if it's someone they can trust. Or they might be impatient to know exactly what the offer is, and whether it's of any value to them.

This is a great opportunity for you. By inserting a P.S. right at the end of the letter, you have a chance to summarize your offer or promise...and inspire the reader to go back into the copy to find out more.

This means you can think of the P.S. as a second headline. The only difference is that it's at the end, instead of the beginning. So it needs to be powerful, with an intriguing, urgent and specific promise which the reader would find difficult to ignore.

Step 4—Write your first draft ...

At this point, you're ready to write your first draft! There's only one rule here, and it's really quite simple. Sit down at your desk, open your computer, and start writing.

I use Evernote for research—but I use Scrivener for writing. Why? Because Scrivener lets you turn everything else OFF—including the internet. And it allows you to expand your page-view to full-page, so (with luck) nothing can distract you.

It's a small tip, but it's kept me writing when I could have been...well...procrastinating—or doing taxes...

At this stage, you want to get everything down. Every idea, every bit of proof, every story, every persuasive argument. My first draft is often twice as long as the end product, but that's fine—I can worry about the editing later...

Step 5—Karate chop your first draft...

When you re-read your first draft, you might notice something interesting. At least, it happens to me—and it happens to other copywriters too...

Almost always, with a first draft, the first few paragraphs seem to take a bit too long getting to the emotional core of the product. But then, usually around the sixth or seventh paragraph, something interesting happens. The copy suddenly becomes more explosive...more intriguing...more real. It suddenly seems to find its feet.

That point—right there—is where the copy should begin. So what do I do? I “Karate Chop” paragraphs one through five.

It happens to me every time. Maybe it's because it takes me time to warm up. To get into the flow. To focus my thoughts. For whatever reason, those first few paragraphs are usually quite stale...

The Karate Chop strategy makes sure the copy begins with a bang, with a roar, with the most emotive and intriguing idea you have.

Step 6—Re-write, re-write, re-write...

When editing and finalizing my copy, I might re-write it up to five or six times. Some sections may even get up to seven or eight re-writes. But each time I re-write, my aim is to focus on a specific goal. First I'll rewrite for content. Next I'll re-write for structure. And finally, I'll re-write for style.

Content re-write: Here, I'm looking specifically at the message. Do I have enough information? Is every claim fully justified? Have I provided just the right amount of detail when citing a study? Am I being repetitive?

Structure re-write: At this point, my headline and lead should already be structurally sound. If they weren't, I wouldn't have gone ahead and finished the copy. So at this point I'm looking at the body of the promotion, from the sales argument through to the P.S. If I'm using premiums, have I put them in the right order? Do I transition well from one section to the next? Is everything linked together in a logical way? Does my One Big Idea feel like a strong enough 'glue' to hold all the different sections and ideas together?

Style re-write: Finally, I'll comb through the copy—reading it out loud—to get a sense of the style. If I'm writing in the voice of the product guru, or the doctor or researcher behind the product, have I created an authentic voice all the way through? Is the language down-to-earth, colloquial, and friendly? Is any of my language out of place? Or a little too racy? Should I replace “what the hell” with “what the heck?” (The answer is “yes”). If I'm writing in my own voice, does it come across as authentic, authoritative and approachable, all at the same time?

The Flesh-Kincaid Reading Level Test

Your client (or your Creative Director) will often request that your copy is at a level of 7 or below on the Flesh-Kincaid scale. That's not school grade 7—the Flesh-Kincaid scale is calculated differently. The best way to test for this is to go to a readability web-site. There are many—but I use www.read-

able.com. If you're working in Microsoft Word, you can test for readability directly using the drop-down menu.

One way to keep your copy readable is to make your sentences short, avoid parentheses and sub-clauses, and avoid the passive voice. In other words, instead of “The results were confirmed by Harvard scientist Dr. Jonas Welk”, write “Harvard scientist Dr. Jonas Welk confirmed the results.” This helps lower your readability level significantly.

It might seem strange that you're asked to keep your readability level so low—but remember... your prospects want a clear, fast, easy-to-read message. The easier, smoother and faster it is, the more likely they will be to reach the end—and the more likely you are to make a sale. Remember how customers love quick and easy health solutions? It's the same with your copy. Although it will be packed with sometimes complex information, you need to deliver that information as if it was the easiest thing in the world. And so that no effort whatsoever is required of the reader.

One final thing...

You're almost ready to send your copy to your client—or your Creative Director. But at this point, my advice is to hang on to your copy for a couple of days—if you possibly can. Don't look at it. Don't think about it. Do something completely different. Read that Jack Kerouac novel you should have read last summer. Or work on a different promotion. Or meditate. Or take a walk in the woods...

Whatever you do, wrap your mind around something else. Get some mental distance from your copy—because at this point, with all those rewrites, you're way too close to your copy to be a good enough judge of its quality.

Then, after a couple of days, take another look at it. Read it as if you're seeing it for the first time.

If it still has the emotional impact you thought it had—then you're good to go. I'm not worried about other factors, at this point. Credibility doesn't fade, the way emotional impact does. If you've put in the right amount of proof, in all the right places, it will always be credible. But emotions are different. They're tricky. They're fleeting. You might think a headline is compelling one day—but the next day it can seem flat. What you want is emotional impact that stands the test of time.

In Chapter 5 you've learned:

How to speed-write your sales pitch...

The 4 Sales Journeys (Belief, Solution, Heart and the One Big Idea)...

How to structure a sales letter...

How to make a Don Corleone offer—one that's "impossible to refuse"...

The art of the false close...

How to rationalize a prospect's buying decision...

How to build urgency into your Call to Action...

The art of the P.S...

How to perfect your copy...

Afterword

Congratulations! By now you're well on your way to becoming a successful copywriter. If you've chosen the health niche as your focus, even better! You have stacks of examples here to refer to, whenever you're stuck for ideas. You can't copy them of course! But hopefully they can inspire you to create compelling new ideas of your own.

Writing for the health market is extremely rewarding. The knowledge you'll gain about health, and about natural or alternative treatments, can help you and your family. It can open your eyes to the truth about the medical establishment—what really works, and what's been hidden or suppressed, and why. That's why whenever I get to work on a new project, I'm excited. I know I'll be learning about new research, whether its for cancer, arthritis, back pain or any other ailment or disease.

But the truly rewarding part of health copywriting is in the creative process. Developing those big ideas...making those big connections...and telling those compelling stories. And, of course, turning it all into winning copy...

I hope this book has helped you on your journey to becoming a successful copywriter. These strategies certainly helped me.

And remember—you can get hold of the Wealthy Health Copywriter checklists and action plans by following the links throughout this book.

Just click here or go to :

<https://nickdaniel.leadpages.co/whc-action-plan/>

Thank you for reading—and best of luck with your copywriting!

Nick Daniel

Oakland, CA

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About the Author

Nick Daniel is a freelance direct mail copywriter for the alternative health industry. His clients include Health Sciences Institute (a subsidiary of Agora), Dr. Sears (Primal Force) and the Healthy Back Institute.

Nick is originally from the U.K. and has lived in China, Vietnam, Hong Kong, Peru, Argentina and Thailand.

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